

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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## QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE ONLY CITY OF THE WORLD  
WORTH LIVING IN.

PARIS, dear, delightful, inimitable, unrivalled Paris, city of delights, city of art, and taste, and luxury; of fashion, and elegance, and wit. Paris, unapproached among earth's most delicious haunts. Paris, queen of the world. Paris, the only city of the world worth living in.

Certainly. This is the refrain to a very old song. You and I, and everybody else, have been singing it, always heartily, and with a kind of sincerity, never ad nauseam, ever since per railway or per diligence we first set foot in Lutetia The Beloved. There is no need to renew in mature age the vaccination we have had in our youth. The Paris virus, once imbibed, is not to be eradicated.

Of course Paris is enchanting. Everybody knows it; everybody says it. One may toil and grow rich and die in London; one may drag on an existence at Vienna, vegetate at Brussels, prowl through the year at Florence, be bored at Rome, hipped at Venice, terrified at St. Petersburg, stupefied at Berlin, excited at New York, soothed at Boston, deluded at Dublin, intoxicated at Edinburgh, astonished at Seville, amused at Milan, occupied at Amsterdam, fatigued at Naples, absorbed at Manchester, salted at Liverpool, cured at Brighton, and killed at New Orleans; but if one wants to live, to see life, to enjoy life, to make the most of life, there is clearly no place in the world for man or woman but Paris.

This is an assertion scarcely worth arguing upon. Opinions are unanimous. Of course there are no bonnets in the world worth the Paris bonnets. The Boulevards are unequalled among streets. Nobody knows how to cook, out of the Palais Royal. No pictures worth looking at are to be seen out of the Louvre, except, indeed, those at the Luxembourg. Why pursue a theme so trite? While I, a single Englishman, am dully sounding the praises of Paris, fifty thousand Germans, Italians, Swedes, Russians, Poles, Czechs, Moldo-Wallachs, Montenegrins, Magyars, and Mussulmans, are crying out that Parisian life is the life

of lives, and that the only city worth living in is Paris.

Lily Floris lived in Paris for seven years. Until she was fifteen years of age, she never passed that gloomy porte cochère in the outer wall of the Pension Marcassin. It was her penitentiary, her prison-house; and a terrible one it was.

There was a vast playground; and in it, when she was not under punishment, she was privileged to walk. Beyond its precincts she never stirred. She never went home for the holidays. The vacations at the Pension Marcassin were three days from the Jour de l'An, the first of January, to the fourth—a week at Easter—a month from the first of August to the second of September. These holidays came and went for seven years, but she remained immured. She had seven years' penal servitude. When the girls were away, long tasks were set her, and these she learnt and wrote, and repeated or submitted to Mademoiselle Marcassin, or, in her absence, to the governess left in charge. It was a dreary probation, and she was Quite Alone.

Lonelier when, at the end of the second year of her captivity, Polly Marygold took her departure. The girl could not refrain from sundry ebullitions of joy at her deliverance from a school of which she was weary, and from a school-mistress whom she hated, but she was nevertheless unfeignedly sorry to leave Lily.

"It's like deserting you in a desert island, my darling," she cried, as she kissed her and kissed her again, on the well-remembered morning of her going away; "or, rather, it's like leaving you in a savage country full of cannibals. For cannibals they are here, and nothing else."

"But you will write to me, Polly? You will, won't you, my dear?" poor Lily replied, twining herself round the neck of the only friend but one she had ever had in the world. "Oh! say that you will write to me, that you will come and see me, or I shall break my heart. I am so very very lonely."

"I know you are, my pet. I wish to goodness you were coming with me. Who knows! Perhaps they'll turn you out as a governess some of these days. Although," she continued, with a profoundly sagacious look, "my own opinion is, that you are heiress to immense estates and vast wealth, in England, and that

some wicked wicked people are keeping you out of it. Think of their changing your name, too, the cruel wretches!"

"But you will write, Polly, won't you; you know you promised to?"

"Yes, my darling," returned Miss Marygold, with a touch of sadness in her voice; "I'll write, but goodness knows whether you will ever get my letters. Madame will 'sequester' them, or I'm very much mistaken. As for coming to see you, the cross old thing will never let me darken her doors again, I'm certain. She has spent my premium, and got all she could out of dear pa, and it's very little she cares about me now. I wonder whether they paid a premium with you, or so much a year!"

And so, Polly Marygold took her merry face and her wavy black hair away, and the world became indeed a desert to Lily. Polly had obtained a situation as governess in the family of a French nobleman, in Brittany. It would be a relief, she said, to find some children who were to be brought up as ladies, and not as governesses.

It has been said that Lily's very name had been changed. Not much stress was laid upon her retaining or bearing her christian name of Lily; only, as Lilies were numerous in the school, she was never so addressed in the class-room. But her appellation of Floris was rigorously condemned, and she was informed that henceforward she was to be Mademoiselle Pauline. It did not much matter. Lily felt as though she had no longer a name at all. Once, going up into a great store-room where the girls' boxes were kept, she found that "Miss Floris" had been painted out from the well-remembered trunk with which Cutwig and Co. had fitted her out; and she burst into bitter tears, less at the thought of the social extinction with which it was sought to visit her, than at the recollection of the two hours passed in the old City shop where Mr. Ranns and 'Melia were so kind to her, and where Cutwig and Co. fitted out all the world.

Often, too, she thought of that tall gentleman who had kissed her on the forehead at Greenwich, and talked to the strange lady in the balcony. The minutest circumstance connected with the dinner dwelt steadfastly in her mind. She could see the splendid old gentleman with his chains and rings, and his fringe of white whiskers; the military gentleman with his black stock, dyed moustachios, strapped-down trousers and spurs; she could hear the laughter, and the clinking of the glasses, and the wine gurgling; the warm odour of the viands came up gently again to titillate her sense of smell. She could see the grey Thames water, the lagging barges, the ships slowly sailing across the field of view, the Essex shore in the distance, the ruddy sunset behind all. But the tall gentleman who had held her between his knees, and filled her plate at dinner, and fondled her, was salient and prominent above all these things. His hair, his clothes, his kindly drawl, his pitying eyes, his hands, so strong-

looking yet so tender, were all present to her. And the more she thought of him, the more she wept; but why she wept, she could not tell.

Then would pass before her a terrible image. That night in the park. How soft and calm the scene was. How happy and peaceful the deer seemed. With what quiet cheerfulness the distant lights, in the hospital wards, in the houses of the town, in the rigging of the ships, twinkled! But then the fierce and angry words of the strange lady came up in grim contrast, and marred all this tranquil loveliness. Lily remembered how she had gripped her arm, and looked upon her with darkling, lowering eyes. And she wept no more; but shuddered.

Now, all had changed. Great gulfs yawned between the few and troubled episodes of her young life. The last was the gloomiest, dreariest, strangest of all. She was in Paris, the city which the strange lady had declared to be the only city in the world worth living in.

This was Lily's Paris:

To rise before it was light in winter-time. To be mewed up till breakfast in the dark school-room, nine-tenths of whose area were icy chill, and the tenth red-hot from the dead baking lowering presence of the stove. To brood over lessons, lessons, lessons, from half an hour after eight until twelve, then to crowd into the refectory for the second breakfast. Then (if haply she were not under punishment) to wander into the playground till two. Then to fag at lessons, lessons again, till five. Then, once more to flock into the refectory to dinner. Then after another hour's wandering in the playground, if it were fine, or cowering in the schoolroom if it were wet, to go through an hour's hideous torture until bedtime—a torture which was called "the study hour"—a time when the girls were supposed to be meditating over the tasks of the day which had just passed, and speculating over those of the morrow which was to come—a time when neither books, nor papers, nor slates were allowed; but when absolute and immovable silence was enjoined, and the movement of a hand, the shuffling of a foot, the turning of a head, was punished by bad marks—when a cough was penal, and a sneeze intolerable—when if a girl, rendered desperate by this excruciating command to be mute, would sometimes break silence  *coquine coquine*—ask some irrelevant question, make some incoherent remark—she would be sentenced to "hold her tongue" for a quarter of an hour—to hold it literally, taking the offending member between her thumb and fore-finger, and striving to retain her hold upon it with the most ludicrously lamentable results of slipperiness—when, if another girl, as would often happen, dropped off to sleep, she would be doomed to stand on one leg for five minutes, and so, in drowsiness that was not to be subdued, would doze off again, and stagger, and come at last to the ground,—to be, to do, and to suffer all these things were among Lily's first experiences of the only city in the world worth living in.

She was miserable, and she had cause to be miserable. The governesses did not so much dislike as they contemned her. It was put about publicly by Mademoiselle Espréménil, as upon authority from the chief, Marcassin, that Pauline, or "la petite Anglaise," was poor, and all but friendless; that she was being "elevated" almost through charity; and that the sphere in which she now moved was much superior to that to which she had been hitherto accustomed. Lily could not disprove these malignant innuendoes. She could not but admit the probability of the schoolmistress knowing a great deal more about her than she knew about herself. So she let them have their way, and suffered in silence. Her schoolmates were not slow to take up the cue dropped by their instructresses. None of the big girls petted her. There were no rich girls in the school. The elder pupils were mostly in training to be governesses, and toiled too hard to find time for petting any one. If wealth engender laziness, it is not unkindly to the cultivation of tender-heartedness. A rich old maid not over pious, is about the pleasantest and most generous soul alive. 'Tis poverty, griping galling grinding poverty, that makes spinsters harsh and sour.

Children are often apt to be pitiless. They have not felt enough pain themselves to compassionate its endurance by others, and they are frequently eager to inflict agony, of the scope and purport whereof they are ignorant. Lily had scant mercy shown her. At first her companions took to pinching her, pulling her hair, treading on her feet, and administering chiquenaudes, or fillips with the thumb and finger, on her cheeks. She bore with these for a time, but at last her temper and her English spirit got the better of her, and she bestowed so sounding a slap on the back of the biggest of her tormentors, that the rest retreated, like a herd of frightened fawns, to a remote corner of the playground, crying out that "la petite Anglaise" was dangerous. French children are proficient in the minute details of bodily torture, but they do not understand baculine arguments of the broader kind. French girls don't slap, French boys don't fight with one another, and French children are never beaten by their instructors. Jean Jacques Rousseau and the French Revolution definitively banished stripes and blows from the educational curriculum of Gaul.

So being somewhat wary respecting overt acts of violence towards the "petite Anglaise," her schoolmates shunned her. She was left alone with her tasks, and her wretchedness, and herself. But for a natural sweetness of mind and gentleness of nature with which the poor child had been gifted by Heaven, she might have grown up sullen, morose, and selfish. There would have been a hundred excuses for her learning to hate her species in general, and school-girls and governesses in particular. But it was mercifully decreed otherwise, for Lily was made for love.

She found, indeed, that those among whom her lot was cast would not, through disdain and prejudice, love her; but she was saved, through her own innate suavity of soul, from falling into the other and perilous extreme of loving herself. Still, she found it necessary to have something to love. There were no dogs or cats about the place to fix her affections upon. Rabbits, squirrels, white mice, silkworms even—all the ordinary domestic menagerie of children—were prohibited in the Pension Marcassin. She was too old to make friends with spiders, with the rapid lizards, with the beetles of sheeny armour. No sparrows ever came into the playground. Small birds are rare in Paris. So, in default of something tangible to love she elected to build up a world of her own, and to people it with creatures of her own imagination, and to dwell among them, and love them very dearly. Her world was totally at war with Mercator's projection. It was a very puerile Utopia, the most frivolous of Formosas, a highly babyish New Atlantis—a silly nonsensical world, if you like; but she believed firmly in it, and her devotion to its inhabitants was unbounded. If she were punished, somebody in the Ideal World came to comfort her, and to show her a clue to work her way out of the labyrinth of a tangled task. If she were unhappy, she was invited to festivals and pic-nics in the Imaginary Land. There she danced; there she sang; there she went to the play; there she romped and skipped; and there, I am afraid, she often went to the water-side to dine on beautiful dishes of fish. But there was no noisy company there; and the strange haughty lady was not one of her company. Only she and the tall gentleman sat at the table, and afterwards went into the balcony to gaze upon the ships, and the long line of the Essex shore, till the sun went down, and it was dark, and the lamps began to glimmer. Silly Lily.

In this great school she was the only captive thus rigorously confined. The other girls went out on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons for long walks. On their return they told her superciliously about the Elysian Fields and the Wood of Boulogne, about the Garden of Plants and the Museum of the Louvre. At Easter they talked of masked balls to which their brothers went, of *débardeurs* and *Pierrots*, of the mad revelry of the carnival, of the fat ox promenading the Boulevards and Hercules leading him, while carriages full of gaily-attired maskers followed the bedizened beast. These joys were not for Lily. She was to be kept under, and in.

Only one thing was wanting to complete her wretchedness, and that came at last. Madame seldom spoke to her alone. When she made her periodical tours of inspection through the classrooms, Lily incurred an augmented share of reproof and bad marks at her hands; but she was seldom summoned to the presence of the Marcassin. It happened, however, one afternoon, in the fifth year of residence, that she was commanded to repair to Madame's cabinet.

The "cabinet" was a square comfortable apartment, not unlike a refrigerator in its chilly atmosphere and light wooden fittings. The Marcassin was the ice in the refrigerator, and froze all who approached her. In the "cabinet" she collated the register of the young ladies' studies and conducts, and made disparaging marginal notes thereon. At her tall desk in the "cabinet" she drew up the alarming "memoirs," or half-yearly bills of the pupils. To the "cabinet," offenders of more than ordinary turpitude were doomed to repair, to undergo the anguish of prolonged and solemn reprimand. Finally, to the cold grey and white papered wall of this cabinet was affixed an enormous framed and glazed pancarte of pasteboard, bearing, in elaborate French engrossing, and with many flourishes, in which the forms of swans, eagles, and griffins preponderated, the names of the pupils of the establishment who had distinguished themselves from six months to six months by assiduity in study, or propriety of conduct. This placard was called the "Tableau d'Honneur." It was renewed at the commencement of every fresh half-year; and a rumour ran through the Pension Marcassin that M. Lestiboudois, the writing-master, received no less a sum than one hundred francs for executing it in ornamental calligraphy.

Lily stood, her hands meekly folded, her head decorously bent, her feet well set together—"position de recueillement humble et attentive," as it was set forth in the codex of disciplinary etiquette observed in the pension—before her instructress. She was mentally wondering of what misdeed she could have rendered herself guilty during the past week to merit a summons to the refrigerating cabinet.

"Fille Floris, called Pauline," said the Marcassin, sternly, and no longer deigning to give Lily a title of courtesy, "you and I must have some conversation together. The affairs have been going on too long in a deregulated manner. They must be regulated now, in a manner definitive. Do you hear me, Fille Floris?"

She spoke in French now, and Lily understood her well. The girl could speak the lively language fluently—so fluently, that she sometimes found herself thinking or addressing the people of the Imaginary Empire in French, and as often discovered her tongue tripping and stumbling when she essayed to sing some little English rhyme of old times.

The Marcassin slowly unlocked one of the drawers in her tall bureau, and took forth two packets of neatly folded papers. One packet was slim and sparse, the other dense and heavy.

"Do you see this, Fille Floris?" she resumed, in a cold and bitter tone, pointing to the slim packet. "One, two, three, four, half-years' memoirs, bills for your pension and education, and which have been duly paid by the persons who placed you here. And now observe." She untied the other packet, undoing with a vengeful

wrench of her teeth an obstinate knot in the string which confined it. "One, two, three, four, five, six—three years' memoirs—nearly three thousand francs for your pension and education; and not one centime of those three thousand francs have been paid. Do you hear me?"

Lily heard, and turned white as her name.

"Three years, then," pursued the pitiless Marcassin, "you have been eating bread and drinking wine to which you have no right. Three years you have been living on my charity. Pale, impertinent, worthless, insubordinate"—poor Lily!—"you have always been; and I have been often obliged to tell you so; but not till this moment have I informed you that you are a pauper and a beggar. Who are the robbers and felons who have left you here to impose on my credulity, and fatten on the fruit of my industry? Speak, little impostor."

"Oh, madame, madame!" the girl urged, tearfully, "I'm not an impostor. It is not my fault. Madame knows much more than I do of the persons who brought me here. I was such a little girl then. I have always done my best, and tried to learn, and to be good. Oh! don't reproach me with what I am innocent of; for I am quite, quite, alone."

"Insolent!" retorted the Marcassin. "You will reason, will you? Ah! it is I who will bring you to reason. Tell me instantly the names of the swindlers who owe me three thousand francs."

"Indeed I don't know, madame. How can I tell? From the day I was brought here, I have never had a single letter, a single visitor, a single friend, except that dear Mademoiselle Marygold, who is gone."

"You dare to mention the name of that rebellious and ungrateful girl to me?" interrupted the schoolmistress, with a furious look. "Allons! It is of a piece with your other impertinence."

Lily could only sob and wring her hands in reply.

"The very clothes you have on your back have been paid for or renewed by me these two years past. You are a burden, a pest, an incumbrance to the school. It is by fraud that you have learnt the piano, the dance. You have robbed me of lessons in drawing and geography. Why do I not give you up to the police for the escroquerie of your parents—if you have any parents—little miserable, who ought to have been put into the crèche of the Enfants Trouvés? Why do I not send you to the Dépôt of Mendicity? Tell me, little beggar brat!"

In a bodily as well as a mental rage at last, which was strange with this frigid woman, she rose and seized Lily by the shoulders and shook her. The terrified girl fled into a corner of the room, too much alarmed to shriek, but trembling and holding her hands before her face.

Mademoiselle Marcassin resumed her self-possession. She was a coldly logical lady, and



recognised the inexpediency of a personal conflict with a pensionnaire whose only fault was that her friends had neglected to pay her half-yearly bills. Besides, she knew that the charges she brought against the girl of being "idle, impertinent, worthless, and insubordinate," were groundless. There were few girls in the school more studious than Lily, and there was not one better conducted.

She sat down at her bureau again, replaced the packets in the drawer, and locked it. "A truce to these absurdities," she said. "No harm has been done you. Let us have no more whimpering, or we will see what effect the atmosphere of the wood-cellar—*la cave au bois*—and two days' bread-and-water will have upon you. Come forward, and stand in front of this bureau, and listen to me."

Lily came forward as she was commanded. She hastily dried her eyes, and stood before the Marcassin, pale, but composed.

"People who eat bread must earn it," remarked the schoolmistress. "Don't think I am going to keep you—*pour vos beaux yeux*—for your own sweet sake. If you continue to live here, you must work. Are you ready to work?"

"Yes, madame, as hard as ever you wish me."

"We shall see. If I sent you away from here, your destination would be the Préfecture de Police. You have no domicile, no papers, no name even that offers reasonable proof of identity, and I question whether the consul of your nation would be at the trouble of reclaiming you. The woman who brought you here—I wish I could catch sight of her, *la vaurienne*!—spoke English, but she was French. She told me you had been born in France. Thus, all the police could do for you would be to send you to a house of correction—a penitentiary, understand me well—where you would be confined till you were twenty-one years of age, where you would be kept all day, either kneeling on the cold stones singing psalms, or working your fingers to the bone with needlework, under the tutelage of the good grey sisters who have little machines and leathern thongs to keep their correctionnaires in order."

Lily's heart sank within her. She had heard appalling stories of the severities practised in the Maisons de Correction—stories which, in justice to the good nuns who conduct those establishments, must be branded as apocryphal. Could they be worse stories than Lily might tell of the Pension Marcassin?

"You may remain here," continued the Marcassin. "But on a different footing. You are no longer a pensionnaire, but a *filie de classe*. You will do what you are told, and learn what you are permitted, and will make yourself as useful as common gratitude for being fed, lodged, and clothed should render you. We will say nothing of the arrears for your board and education. If I cannot discover the swindlers who have cozened

me out of my money you and I will have some future conversation on the matter. Now you may go."

### CAREFULLY MOVED IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

If any reader of this periodical should require full and valuable information regarding the houses in the various suburbs of London, their size, rent, advantages and disadvantages, annual amount of sewer's rate and land tax, soil, climate, quality of water, and other particulars, let him address a letter, post-paid, to "Wanderer," under cover to the Conductor, and he will have his heart's desire. I am "Wanderer," if you please, and I am in a position to give the information named; for, during the last ten years, I have led a nomadic and peripatetic existence: now becoming the tenant of a villa here, now blossoming as the denizen of a mansion there, sipping the sweets of the assessed taxes and the parochial rates, and then flying off with my furniture in several large vans to a distant neighbourhood. Want of money, possession of funds, hatred of town, detestation of the country, a cheerful misanthropy, and an unpleasant gregariousness, all these have, one by one, acted upon me, and made me their slave. What I have learned by sad experience, I now purpose to teach: setting myself up as a pillar of example and warning to my dissatisfied fellow-creatures.

Before I married, I lived in chambers in Piccadilly, kept my horse, belonged to the Brummel Club, and was looked upon as rather a fine fellow; but when I married, my Uncle Snape (from whom I obtained the supplies for my expenses and who was a confirmed woman-hater) at once stopped my allowance, and I had nothing but my professional earnings as an Old Bailey barrister, and a hundred a year, which I had inherited. Under these circumstances I had intended going into lodgings; but my wife's family (I don't know exactly what that means: she has no mother, and her father never interferes with her or her sisters: I think it must be her sisters who are the family, but we always speak of "the family") were very genteel, and looked upon lodgings as low; so it was generally understood that I must take a house, and that "the family" would help to furnish it. I need not mention that there was a great discussion as to where the house should be. The family lived in St. John's Wood, and wished us to be near them; but the rents in that saintly neighbourhood were beyond my means, and, after a great deal of searching and heart-aching worry, after inspecting a dozen "exact things," "just what you wanted," and "such treasures!" found for me by friends, none of which would do, I at last took a house in Bass's-buildings, in the New-road. That great thoroughfare has since been sub-divided, I think, but then it was the New-road stretching from Paddington to Islington, and our house was about a mile from

the Paddington end. It was small, but so was the rent, sixty pounds a year, and it was quite large enough for my wife and me and our one servant. It had a little garden in front, between it and the road, with a straight line of flagstones leading direct from the gate to the door-steps, and bits of flower-beds (in which nothing ever grew) intersected by little gravel paths about a foot wide. This garden was a source of great delight to my humorous friends. One of them could be seen carefully putting one foot before the other, in order that he might not step off the path, and, after wandering in and out between the little beds, would feign excessive fatigue on his arrival at the house, declaring he had been "lost in the shrubbery;" another would suggest that we should have a guide on the spot to show visitors the nearest way; while a third hoped we intended giving some out-door fêtes in the summer, assuring us that the "band of the Life Guards would look splendid on that," pointing to a bit of turf about the size of a pocket-handkerchief. When the street door was opened wide back, it entirely absorbed the hall, and we could not get out of the dining-room door; but then we could, of course, always pass out through the "study," a little room like a cistern, which just held my desk and one chair.

There was a very small yard at the back, giving on to a set of stables which had their real entrance in the mews; but we were compelled to cover all our back windows with putty imitative of ground glass, on which we stuck cut-out paper designs of birds and flowers, as these looked directly on the rooms over the stables, inhabited by the coachman and his family; and the sight of a stalwart man at the opposite window, shaving himself in very dingy shirt-sleeves within a few feet of your nose, was not considered genteel by The Family. We were rather stify in the up-stairs rooms, owing to low ceilings, and a diffidence we felt as to opening the windows, for the New Road is a dusty thoroughfare, and the immediate vicinity of a cab-stand, though handy on some occasions, lets one into rather a larger knowledge of the stock of expletives with which the English language abounds, than is good for refined ears. But when we knew that the coachman was out, we used to open the back windows and grow very enthusiastic over "the fresh air from Hampstead and Highgate," which, nevertheless, always seemed to me to have a somewhat stabley twang. One great point with The Family was that there were no shops near us: that being an acme of vulgarity which, it appears, no well-regulated mind can put up with; to be sure, the row immediately opposite to us was bounded by a chemist's, but then, you know, a chemist can scarcely be called a tradesman—at least The Family thought so—and his coloured bottles were rather a relief to the eye than otherwise, giving one, at night, a strange idea of being at sea in view of land. On the door next to the chemist's, stood, when we first took possession of our house in Bass's-buildings, a

brass plate with "Middlemiss, Portrait Artist," on it, and by its side a little case containing miniatures of the officer, the student in cap and gown, and the divine in white bands, with the top of the wooden pulpit growing out from under his arms, which are common to such professors. It was a thoroughly harmless little art-studio, and apparently did very little business, no one ever being seen to enter its portal. But after a twelvemonth Mr. Middlemiss died, and we heard through the electric chain of our common butcher, that his son, a youth of great spirit, was about to carry on the business. The butcher was right. The new proprietor was a youth of great spirit, no half measures with him; he certainly did not fear his fate too much, nor were his deserts small (though in his lamented father's time his dinners were said to have been restricted), for he set his fate upon one touch—of paint—to win or lose it all. He coloured the entire house a bright vermilion, on which, from attic to basement, the following sentences were displayed in deep black letters. "The Shop for Portraits! Stop, Examine, and Judge for Yourself! 'Sit, Cousin Perey, sit, good Cousin Hotspur'—Shakespeare! Photography Defied! Your Likeness in Oils in Ten Minutes! 'The Counterfeit Presentment'—Shakespeare. Charge low, Portraits lasting! Art, not Mechanical Labour!" Kit-cat portraits of celebrated characters copied from photographs leered out of every window, while the drawing-room balcony was given up to Lord John Russell waving a parchment truncheon, and Mr. Sturgeon, the popular preacher, squinting at his upheld forefinger. The Family were out of town when this horrible work was undertaken: when they returned, they declared with one voice that we could live in Bass's-buildings no longer, and must move at once.

I was not sorry, though I liked the little house well enough, but we had been confined there, in more senses than one, and wanted more room for our family, now increased by a baby and a nurse. The nurse was a low-spirited young person afflicted with what she called "the creeps," under the influence of which she used to rock to and fro, and moan dismally and slap the baby on the back; and it was thought that change of scene might do her good. I was glad, too, for another reason. I had recently obtained occasional employment on a daily journal, which detained me until late at night at the newspaper office, and I had frequently to attend night consultations at the chambers of leading barristers, to whom I was to act as junior. Bass's-buildings were a horrible distance from the newspaper office and the chambers; and walking home at night had several times knocked me up. So my wife submitted to The Family, a proposition that I must remove to some more convenient position; and The Family, after a struggle (based, I am inclined to think, on the reflection that lunch at my expense would not be so practicable), consented.

The neighbourhood of Russell-square was that

selected, and in it we began to make constant research. There are few Londoners of the rising generation who know those ghastly streets, solemn and straight, where the daylight at the height of summer fades at four o'clock, and in winter only looks in for an hour about noon; where the houses, uniform in dirt and dinginess, in lack of paint on their window-sills, and in fulness of filth on their windows, stare confronting each other in twin-like similitude. Decorum-street, Hessian-street, Walcheren-square, Great Dettingen-street, each exactly resembling the other, all equally dreary, equally deserted, equally heart-breaking, equally genteel. Even the family could not deny the gentility, but were good enough to remember having visited a judge in Culloden-terrace, and having been at the routs of Lady Flack, wife of Sir Nicholas Flack, Baronet, Head of the College of Physicians, and Body-preserver in Ordinary to the great Georgius of sainted memory. All the districts just named were a little above my means, but eventually I settled down into a house in Great Dowdy-street, a row of small but very eligible tenements on the Dowdy estate. None of your common thoroughfares, to be rattled through by vulgar cabs and earth-shaking Pickford's vans, but a self-included property with a gate at each end and a lodge with a porter in a gold laced hat and the Dowdy arms on the buttons of his mulberry-coloured coat, to prevent any one, except with a mission to one of the houses, from intruding on the exclusive territory. The rent was seventy pounds a year, "on a repairing lease" (which means an annual outlay of from five-and-twenty to thirty to keep the bricks and mortar and timbers together), and the accommodation consisted of a narrow dining-room painted salmon colour, and a little back room looking out upon a square black enclosure in which grew fearful fungi; two big drawing-rooms, the carpeting of which nearly swallowed a quarter's income; two good bedrooms, and three attics. I never went into the basement save when I visited the cellar, which was a mouldy vault under the street pavement only accessible through the area, and consequently rendering any one going to it liable to the insults of rude boys, who would grin through the area-railings, and say, "Give us a drop, guv'nor;" or, "Mind you don't drop the bottle, old 'un;" and other ribald remarks—but I believe the kitchen was pronounced by the servants to be "stuffy," and the whole place "ill convenient," there being no larder, pantry, nor the usual domestic arrangements. I know, too, that we were supposed to breed and preserve a very magnificent specimen of the black-beetle, insects which migrated to different parts of the house in droves, and which, to the number of five-and-twenty being met slowly ascending the drawing-room stairs, caused my wife to swoon, and me to invest money in a hedgehog: an animal that took up his abode in the coal-cellar on the top of the coals, and, retiring thither early one morning after a surfeit of beetles, was supposed to have been inadvertently "laid" in the

fire by the cook in mistake for a lump of Walls-end.

I don't think there were many advantages in the Great Dowdy-street house (though I was very happy there, and had an immense amount of fun and pleasure) beyond the proximity to my work, and the consequent saving in cab hire and fatigue. But I do recollect the drawbacks; and although six years have elapsed since I experienced them, they are constantly rising in my mind. I remember our being unable ever to open any window without an immediate inroad of "blacks:" triturate soot of the most penetrating kind, which at once made piebald all the antimacassars, toilet-covers, counterpanes, towels, and other linen; I remember our being unable to get any sleep after five A.M., when, at the builder's which abutted on our black enclosure, a tremendous bell clanged, summoning the workmen to labour, and from which time there was such a noise of sawing, and hammering, and planing, and filing, and tool grinding, and bellows blowing, interspersed with strange bellowings in the Celtic tongue from one Irish labourer to another, and mingled with oburgations in pure Saxon from irate overseers, that one might as well have attempted a quiet nap in the neighbourhood of Babel when the tower was in course of erection. I remember, on the first occasion of our sleeping there, a horrible yell echoing through the house, and being discovered to proceed from the nurse aforementioned, who had, at the time of her shrieking, about six A.M., heard "ghostes a burstin' in through the walls." We calmed her perturbed spirit, finding no traces of any such inroads, but were aroused in a similar manner the next morning, and then discovered that the rushing in of the New River supply, obedient to the turncock's key, was the source of the young person's fright. I remember the hot summer Sunday afternoons, when the pavement would be red-hot, and the dust, and bits of straw, and scraps of paper would blow fitfully about with every little puff of air, and the always dull houses would look infinitely duller with their blinds down, and no sound would fall upon the ear save the distant hum of the cabs in Holborn, or the footfall of some young person in service going to afternoon church—or to what was, in her mind, its equivalent—in all the glory of open-worked stockings, low shoes, and a prayer-book swaddled in a white cotton pocket-handkerchief. I have sat at my window on scores of such Sundays, eyeing the nose of Lazarus over the dwarf Venetian blinds opposite, or the gorgeous waistcoat of Eliason, a little higher up (for the tribes are great in the neighbourhood). I have stared upward to catch a glimpse of the scrap of blue unclouded sky, visible above the houses; and then I have thought of Richmond Hill; of snowy tablecloths, and cool Moselle-cup, and salmon cutlets, in a room overhanging the river at the Orkney Arms, at Maidenhead; of that sea breeze which passes the little hotel at Freshwater Bay, in wild hurry to make play over the neighbouring downs; of shaded walks, and

cool retreats, and lime avenues, and overhung bathing-places, and all other things delicious at that season; until I have nearly gone mad with hatred of Great Dowdy-street, and fancied myself pretty able to comprehend the feelings of the Polar bears in their dull retrogressive promenade in the Zoological Gardens. That none of our friends had ever heard of Great Dowdy-street; that no cabman could be instructed as to its exact whereabouts, naming it generally as "somewhere near the Fondlin'"; that migration to a friend's house in a habitable region to dinner occasioned an enormous expense in cab fare; that all the tradesmen with whom we had previously dealt declined our custom, "as they never sent that way;" that we found Tottenham-court-road a line of demarcation, behind which we left light, and sunshine, and humanity—on our side of which we tumbled into darkness and savagery; that we were in the midst of a Hansom cab colony, clattering home at all hours of the night; and in the immediate neighbourhood of all the organ men, who gave us their final grind just before midnight; all these were minor but irritating annoyances. At length, after six years' experience of this life, we heard that Uncle Snape was dead and had left me some money, and we immediately determined on quitting Great Dowdy-street.

"Oh! my life in Egypt!" sighs Cleopatra, in the Dream of Fair Women, remembering the dalliance and the wit, the Libyan banquets, and all the delights of that brief but glorious season. "Oh! my life in Agatha Villa, Old Brompton!" say I, which was quite as brief, and almost as glorious. We entered upon Agatha Villa immediately on quitting Great Dowdy-street, and revelled in the contrast. Such an elegant house, such a dining-room in red flock paper and black oak furniture, such a drawing-room in satin paper and chintz, opening with large French windows upon a little lawn, such a study for me, such a spare bedroom for a bachelor friend from Saturday till Monday! It was at Agatha Villa that we commenced our delightful little Sunday dinners—which indeed finished in the same place. It was at Agatha Villa we first discovered how fond people were of us, what a popular writer I was, how my oratorical displays at the Old Bailey were making a sensation. People liked coming to see us at Agatha Villa: not for the mere sake of what they got, of course, but because they were sure of meeting "such charming people" at our house: money was all very well, they would remark, but no money could bring together such a host of genius as was always to be seen at Agatha Villa. The host of genius (I'm not speaking of myself) was expensive to entertain; it stopped late, it dined heavily, it smoked on the lawn, and remained sipping cold drinks until past midnight. Its admirers remained too: sometimes some of the host of genius borrowed money and didn't return it; the host of genius was always either painting a picture which I was expected to buy, or giving a concert which we were expected to patronise, or having a

"ben" for which we had to take stalls. From one of the admirers of the host of genius, I bought a pair of horses; they were not good horses; from another I purchased a phaeton, it *was* a bad one! I confess I did not like the manner in which some of the host of genius used to climb up the walls and kiss their hands to Miss Crump's young ladies who were walking in the next garden, and I owned to Miss Crump that it was too strong retaliation even for the pianoforte practice at 5 A.M.; they could not take any liberties with my neighbour on the other side, for he was Dr. Winks, the celebrated mad-doctor, and we were always in a state of mental terror lest some of his patients should get loose and come over the wall at us. However, the life at Agatha Villa, though merry, was brief. Through my own exertions, and those of the host of genius, I ran through a couple of thousand pounds in two years, and then the Cotopaxi Grand Imperial Mining Company, in which I had invested the rest of Uncle Snape's money, went to smash, and I had to give up Agatha Villa.

The thought of having to return to London and its dreariness, in the summer which had just set in, was the bitterest morsel of that tart of humility which we were about to partake of; and you may judge, therefore, with what delight I received an offer of a country-house, rent free, for a year. "It's a capital old house, any way," said old Cutler, its owner, "a capital house, near town, and yet thoroughly in the country. I'm going to take my gal abroad for a year to see the Continent, and you're not only welcome to live at Wollops, but I shall be obliged to you for keeping the place aired." Now, Wollops *was* a house, if you like! An old red-brick Queen Anne mansion, with little deep mullioned diamond-paned windows, with quaint old armour in the hall, and a portrait of Brabazon de Wollop, temp. Charles the Second, over the chimney-piece; there were long passages, and tapestry-hung rooms, and oak corridors, and secret doors, and a wine-cellar so like a subterranean dungeon, that my heart sunk within me every time I entered it; there were likewise numerous bedrooms with tremendous bedsteads all plumes and hangings; and a stone kitchen like that one in the Tower of London which Mr. Cruikshank drew. The house stood in the middle of splendid grounds, there was a carriage-drive up to it, its drawing and dining room windows looked out upon a beautiful lawn dotted here and there with brilliant beds of verberna and scarlet geranium; and there was a lake, and a kitchen-garden, and an orchard, all kept up at Mr. Cutler's expense; and everything was so noble and so grand, that a friend, who knew the reason of our quitting Agatha Villa, remarked, on seeing Wollops, that one more attempt at retrenchment would take us into Buckingham Palace. From our windows we looked away over green fields, to Harrow on the one side, to Highgate on the other, and it was worth something when coming

From brawling courts  
And dusty purlieus of the law,



to feel your feet on the turf, with the sweet fresh air blowing round you, and that soft silence, broken only by the pipe of bird or hum of insect, which is the greatest of all rural charms to an overworked Londoner. Wollops was too far for the host of genius, as they could not have got back at night, so we only had our own friends and The Family. I am happy to say that the croquet parties at Wollops were the cause of marrying off my wife's two younger sisters: one to a revising barrister, and the other to a county court judge: while the elder girls, who had been very uncivil about what they called the "goings on" at Agatha Villa, were so delighted with Wollops that they forgave us off hand, and each came and stayed a month. All this was during the summer weather; the autumn of that year was as good as summer, warm, clear, and sunny, and we were thoroughly happy. But, one fatal morning in the middle of November we got up and found winter had arrived; the wind roared through the old house, and moaned and shrieked in the long corridors; the rain dashed against the badly fitting romantic windows, and lodged in large pools on their inner sills; the water-pipe along the house was choked, overflowed, soaked through the old red brick, which was just like sponge, and, coming through the drawing-room wall, spoilt my proof copy of Landseer's *Titania*. The big bare trees outside, rattled and clashed their huge arms, the gardeners removed everything from the beds, the turf grew into rank grass, and the storms from Harrow to Highgate were awful in their intensity. Inside the house, the fires would not light for some time, and then the chimneys smoked awfully, and the big grates consumed scuttles of coals and huge logs of wood without giving out the smallest heat. The big hall was like a well; after dark the children were afraid to go about the passages; and the servants came in a body and resigned, on account of the damp of the stone kitchen. Gradually the damp penetrated everywhere; lucifers would not strike, a furry growth came upon the looking-glass, the leather chairs all stuck to us when we attempted to rise. My wife wanted us to leave Wollops, but I was firm—for two nights afterwards; then the rats, disturbed by the rains from their usual holes, rushed into our bedroom and danced wildly over us. The next morning at six A.M. I despatched the gardener to town, to bring out three cabs, and removed my family in those vehicles to lodgings in Cockspur-street, where I am at present.

#### THE BLOSSOMING TIME.

The violets, in bunches of purple,  
Bloom sweet on the bosom of Spring;  
The thrushes, up high on the larches,  
Of summer, of summer-time sing.  
The primroses light the green shadows  
Of fir woods, odorous, dim;  
And deep in the darkest of coverts  
The nightingale chanteth his hymn.

That's at dusk; but I speak of the morning,  
When sunbeams glance into the wood,

And lay in long passages, golden,  
Like paths for the spirits of good.  
The thrushes are singing in chorus,  
The blackbird outwhistles them all;  
Up there on the aspen he carols—  
The aspen so light and so tall.

The squirrels sport up in the beeches,  
The bees on the furze-blossom sleep.  
The lark o'er the green corn and clover,  
The ricks and the close huddled sheep,  
Soars, soars, and in ecstasy singing,  
Bears upward his prayer unto Heaven:  
He's the priest of the blue upper region,  
Nor rests he a day in the seven.

'Tis a time full of hope and of promise,  
This youth of the blossoming year,  
All is pleasure on earth and in ether,  
No clouding of sorrow nor fear.  
There is love singing loud from the branches,  
There is love in each wavering flower,  
Yes, love in each blade of the barley,  
That steals to the light every hour.

#### SHAKESPEARE-MAD.

I FEEL NOW, at this cool and collected moment, that for a whole week I have been going about with straws in my hair—a raving maniac. Here are the straws lying before me in a tangled wisp: a pewter medal, with an effigy in profile of the Immortal Bard on one side, and a front elevation view of his birthplace on the other; item, a triple badge in Coventry ribbon with the Bard's lineaments in floss silk, and woven representations of natal spot, and church containing dust; item, button with rosy-checked miniature of the Bard in enamel; item, blue scarf with full length Bard in an impossible but traditional attitude, pointedly calling attention to a scroll inscribed with a passage from his own works, of which, I am led to infer, he was particularly proud.

Now, considering that for six days I have been rushing about in a frantic state of excitement with all these straws in my hair, I take it as highly generous on the part of my relatives that they have abstained from procuring the certificate of two qualified medical practitioners, and locking me up in Bedlam. When the mania seized upon me, I resolved to do two things which the Bard himself, in his profound philosophy, never could have dreamt of. I resolved to assist at the planting of a tree in London, and to be present at a display of fireworks in Stratford-upon-Avon, on one and the same day. I carried my resolve into execution. I was on Primrose-hill at three o'clock, and I was on the bridge at Stratford-upon-Avon at nine. But I had entered upon my mad career before this.

At the witching hour of the previous night, when the last stroke of twelve ushered in the natal day, I betook myself to a famous hostelry to sup in the Bard's honour, in the exclusive company of the living illustrators of his works. I will not attempt to conceal that I was drawn thither, not altogether by reverence for the

Bard, but, in some degree, by the expectation that certain of his illustrators would probably appear in the full evening costume of velvet tunics and russet boots with spurs. It was whispered that, on the transpontine shore, russet boots and spurs were considered the correct thing on such high festive occasions. Let me silence whispering malice, and give the transpontine illustrators their due. If there were any there more spotless as to shirt fronts, more resplendent as to the polish of their patent leather boots, more completely en règle as to the dimensions of their white cravats, more fashionable as to the cut of their black dress-coats and pantaloons, more snowy as to the hue of their cambric handkerchiefs, than others, they were the illustrators from over the water. I will even go so far as to say that, as regards the oiliness of their hair, and the number of plaits on their shirt-fronts, they put the illustrators of the West End to shame and confusion. When I found myself in their midst crushing up the broad stairs of the hostel, all classes and degrees mingling on equal terms of brotherhood in honour of the great High Priest of their art, it occurred to me that I was not doing such a very mad thing after all. Up they went, a strangely amalgamated crowd of leading tragedians and comedians, rubbing shoulders and exchanging friendly greetings with general utility, and supernumeraries, and pantomimists, and prompters, and call-boys, and even door-keepers. Ah, surely he was a Great Magician, whose name, after three centuries, could work such a charm. It was good for the heart to see such community of feeling, and curious to mark how unaccustomed they all were to the use of tickets of admission. None of them had their tickets ready, and when they were demanded by the man at the top of the stairs, the illustrators seemed to regard it as quite a joke that *they* should be asked for tickets, as if they were the public. When they were all seated, the great hall was, as an illustrator in the eccentric line observed, "gorged with talent," which evoked from another the remark that it would be a fine thing for the country actors, longing for London, if the floor were to give way and entomb the lot. Happily, however, no such combination of good and bad luck occurred; though the enthusiasm at times was well calculated to inspire fears for the security of the roof. The unveiling of the statue of the Bard at the beginning of the feast, acted like a spark of fire upon a heap of gunpowder. The illustrators sprang to their feet and went off in one tremendous bang of applause. Yet there could scarcely have been twenty persons in that room who had much to be thankful to the Bard for. For four or five whom he had blessed with Macbeth, there were a hundred whom he had condemned to the carrying of banners. I had the pleasure of sitting beside a banner-bearer, one who had nailed his colours to the flagstaff in early life, and was resolved to stand by them to the last, and he was as enthusiastic as—nay, more enthusiastic than Macbeth, who, I am bound to say, devoted him-

self very closely to his supper, and took it coolly.

The name of Shakespeare, mention of the Player's Art, the Stage, were all so many sparks of fire falling upon gunpowder which never burned out, but always renewed itself from its own ashes and smoke to go off again and again with an explosion which shook the walls, and caused their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of Kent and Sussex to tremble in their gilt frames. So much enthusiasm and so much unity of feeling were probably never witnessed in any similar gathering. Nothing but Shakespeare's wand could have ruled such an ocean, ordinarily agitated by so many diverse currents and disturbed by so many opposing winds. All jealousies and disappointments were laid aside for the time, and one feeling animated and controlled the vast assembly. Notwithstanding a little noisy disagreement—not about Shakespeare—which took place between two perfervid youths at the end of the room, this gathering of actors in honour of the great master of the dramatic art was, in its broad and general aspect, a most impressive spectacle. I, who had come with a strong predisposition to be amused, rather than impressed, was fain to confess this much. I could not think of any other class that would have been so unanimous and so hearty in an act of homage to a chief. And so, when they had lingered to the last, loth to tear themselves away from a scene of such rare enjoyment, in the bright sunshine on the morning of Shakespeare's three hundredth birthday, the players streamed out into the street, while citizens, awakened possibly from dreams of last night's play, peered at them from the corners of blinds, and utterly failed to recognise Falstaff in the respectable cleanly gentleman gaily jumping into a Hansom cab; or Bardolph in the smart young man with the embroidered shirt-front; or King Henry the Fourth in the tall gentleman in the black surtout, borrowing a light for his cigar from Francis, the drawer, in all the magnificence of a white hat resplendent in the morning sun.

Surely I am mad now, for I go away in a four-wheeled cab in company with Hamlet Prince of Denmark, and Horatio his friend, and the First Gravedigger, who has only one waistcoat on, and that bound with gold braid, and the Ghost of Hamlet's father outside on the box, scenting the morning air with a briar-root pipe, away to north-western regions, where early shop-keeping birds are taking down their shutters, and preparing to catch the first human worm that appears above ground—away in the fresh morning air, until we begin to persuade ourselves that we are not tired, and that there is no necessity to go to bed.

We do not go to bed, but joyfully accept an invitation to breakfast with First Gravedigger, whose pressing hospitality at that awkward hour in the morning is an astonishment to us all, until he informs us that the partner of his bosom is out of town; which fully accounted, I will not say for the

milk in the cocoa-nut, but for the coffee with boiling milk, accompanied by hot rolls and a cold capon—I will not say fowl in this connexion—with which we were presently refreshed. Passed several hours in a ridiculous attempt to be lively and wide awake, and just giving it up and sinking into the arms of Morpheus and an easy-chair, when the Ghost of Hamlet's Father, who is used to late hours, cries out, "More Shakespeare!" and we all start to our feet, and find, on consulting the dials in our pokes, that it is time to hie us to the Oak. So away we go through the gate, and past a cluster of genteel villas, to the base of the mountain, whereon a number of flying merchants and perambulating speculators have seized the occasion to revive the glories of Chalk Farm fair. Oi Polloi in great force, vox populi very loud, harshly and hoarsely inviting us to eat oranges—though that was not particularly enjoined if we only bought them—to drink sherbet, to have a shie at a cocoa-nut three sticks a penny, to treat ourselves to an electric shock, to try our weight, to buy gingerbread-nuts. Some confusion of ideas apparent with respect to the occasion. Shakespeare a good deal mixed up with Garibawldy. Boys, evidently unable to grapple with the subject in hand, give vent to their general feelings in the exclamation, "Whoop, Shakespeare!" which may, or may not, have been intended to be complimentary. I perceive that the tree has been already planted, but there is no great sensation in its immediate neighbourhood. The flying merchants and the perambulating speculators cannot complain that the Bard is exercising any superior attraction. He isn't. Populace cannot be induced to pay a shilling for admission to the enclosure round the tree. If there is anything that is considered not for an age, but for all time, it is the game of three sticks a penny. Some slight sensation, but not much, when Mr. Phelps is brought along, a man on each side of him holding him fast by the arms. It occurs to me that Mr. Phelps is in custody, and that the two men are policemen in plain clothes—very plain clothes, I may remark—taking him off to the station. I follow, intending to offer myself as bail, and try to catch the tragedian's mournful eye, but he is evidently ashamed of himself, and does not wish to be recognised; so I spare his feelings, and remain to review the procession, which consists of six men and a boy, the last carrying a brown paper parcel, which a youth of an inquiring mind, who turns himself upside down to read the inscription on the cover, informs me contains the "hode."

I followed Mr. Phelps with my eyes until I saw him dragged into the station-house and confronted with the inspector, who immediately took down the charge, the two officers in plain clothes evidently asseverating that the tragedian had assaulted them in the execution of their duty, and had been very obstreperous and violent. What they did with him after that I cannot say, and few apparently cared to know; for, after the procession passed, the populace

resumed the shieving of three sticks, and cracked nuts, and weighed itself, and took electric shocks, and generally dispersed itself over the hill out of sight of the Oak and out of hearing of the Ode. In the comfortable belief that I had seen all and done my duty, I now turned my steps homewards, but had not proceeded far when I heard the strains of martial music, and presently came upon a small army of Foresters marching on to the field, like the Prussians at Waterloo, a little late in the day. I understand that at this moment Mr. Phelps was standing with his watch in his hand wishing that either Chaos or the Foresters were come. That the Foresters were late seemed to be entirely owing to their zeal and love of glory, for they insisted upon bringing the banner of the Bard of Avon lodge with them, and the banner being large, requiring two poles, and the wind contrary, the army, which, in respect of its mainsail, seemed to be one of foot-marines, made rather a slow march, or rather voyage of it. That its progress had been an arduous and disastrous one became painfully evident to me as I proceeded onward. All along the road I encountered stray Foresters who had fallen out of the ranks, overcome by fatigue and—as they were generally showing their exhaustion in close proximity to a public-house—possibly beer. One gentleman in a full suit of Lincoln green and a hat with three exhausted feathers, was being danced round by a little circle of boys and girls, who seemed to have some vague notions that he might be Shakespeare, or at any rate some celebrity deserving of honour. This is the last glimpse I have of the celebration in London.

In little more than three hours after I am at the little station at Stratford-upon-Avon, in company with about a dozen others, who are all the pilgrims who have come by the G. W. R. that evening to worship at the shrine. As I had never visited Stratford before, I declined a conveyance, and walked into the town, prepared to feel that I was treading sacred ground, and to be much moved by all I saw. I expected to come upon "the House" suddenly, and I felt sure I should know it from its portraits. Every now and then I thought I saw it looming in the distance, and began to feel a thrill, but I was mistaken again and again, and the thrill subsided—subsided past recall, when I suddenly found myself in front of a yellow caravan, where they were exhibiting waxwork and a Scotch giant. This diverted my thoughts. I began to think of the pushing character of the people north of the Tweed, who had sent this Scotch giant to compete with the great English giant on his own ground and on his own natal day. Certainly the Scotch giant had the best of it in one respect. He was alive, O! alive!

Not coming upon the house fortuitously, as I expected, I thought it prudent—particularly as I had heard alarming accounts of the great influx of pilgrims, and the scarcity of accommodation—to look out for an hotel. Found one in the principal street, and was asked a guinea a night for a bed. Explained that I was not

Baron Rothschild, and was informed that I might have one higher up for half a guinea; consented to this, and had a momentary impression that I must be very rich; and that hitherto I had been regulating my expenditure on a scale altogether unbefitting my means. Could not rest for refreshment or anything, until I had seen the House; so immediately sallied out in search of it, trying to forget the yellow caravan and the Scotch giant. Did not like to inquire my way to the House; felt that I ought to be drawn to it by an influence; and that it would show a want of delicacy and veneration to ask any one to show it me, as if it were a bank or a post-office, or something of that sort. Stratford was not so large a town but that I might easily find the shrine which was its pride and glory, its sacred place. The paths worn with pilgrims' feet should direct me to it. I assure you I had got over the Scotch giant, and was fully primed with the right feeling. I have the bump of veneration strongly developed. Vestiges of antiquity, relics of great men, places with classic associations interest and move me deeply. I never pass through Temple Bar and take a walk down Fleet-street without thinking of Johnson and Goldsmith, and picturing them in my mind's eye. I had long looked forward to this day; long promised myself a visit to Stratford; many a time and oft had visited it in imagination, and realised all the sensations which its associations are calculated to inspire. And I was prepared to realise all these feelings now with tenfold intensity. But I could not find the House, and was obliged to ask my way to it after all. It is a fact, that the person to whom I applied for guidance looked puzzled, and turned first this way and then that, and at last confessed that he "really didn't know where the House was situated." He was apparently an intelligent man, in the cattle-dealing line, I fancy; but he had an excuse for his ignorance in so insignificant a matter—he had been only a fortnight in Stratford!

"Down there, sir, on the right-hand side of the way," said a native. I was thankful for the first part of the direction, but I did not want him to tell me on which side of the way; I wanted to find that out for myself, and I escaped hastily, lest the native should spoil my pleasure by pointing at the house with a showman's finger, and saying, "That's it!" I knew now that I was coming to it, and that a few more paces would bring me to it. I was approaching with all reverence, and with a feeling that the thrill was about to rise, when the sky was suddenly illuminated by a flash of bright light, accompanied by a peculiar rushing noise in the air. I was not left for a single moment in doubt as to the cause. I looked up, and saw that it was a rocket. They were letting off fireworks in the neighbouring meadow! A few more steps and I was in front of the House, and *I saw it for the first time by the light of fireworks!* The thrill did not rise. By the garish light of red and blue and green fires I

saw a house which had been restored out of all its antiquity, which was trim, and neat, and angular, and varnished, and which, when the rockets exploded and rained down their spray of coloured fires, and the people shouted in the meadow, recalled a vision of Vauxhall. The general tea-garden aspect of the house was disappointing enough, but with the accompaniment of fireworks the effect was shockingly depressing. There was so much of the tea-garden about the place, that I should not have been at all surprised if some one had appeared at the window, sung a comic song, and asked conundrums. Indeed, on returning presently through the deserted street—there was not a soul in it besides myself on this evening of the Tercentenary—I heard the sound of minstrelsy proceeding from a public-house, and, looking through the window, I beheld a busker in the costume of the music-hall Irishman, dancing a jig and singing Limerick Races, while the townsmen of Shakespeare sat around and drank beer, and smoked pipes, and did homage to the Bard!

I knew that I should never feel the thrill after this. The restorer and the fireworks had done for me. So I went in for the display of fireworks pure and simple, and thought it, *per se*, not so very bad.

A few flags fluttering about the pretty little town, but no commotion until after the fireworks, when a dense crowd of yokels breaks into the streets, like an inundation of muddy water. Heedless, blundering yokels, with tremendous feet, who run against you, and stamp upon you, and scent the air with fustian and corduroy. Away they go, following the band, and when the band has blown itself out they disperse themselves among the little taverns, which seem to be in the proportion of one to three of the houses, and the streets are quiet and deserted again.

Revisited the House on Sunday morning, hoping to see it under more favourable circumstances. Well, there were no fireworks, and the new beams and laths let into the house did not look so varnished and glittering by daylight. Peeped in at one of the windows, never imagining that I would be admitted on that day, when a person immediately ran out and pounced upon me. Would I walk up? but first my sixpence. I paid my sixpence and walked up; but here again my pleasure was marred. The work of renovation had not been extended to the natal chamber, and I could well believe that no alteration had been made in it since Shakespeare's time; but it was occupied by two huge Warwickshire policemen in full uniform, whose presence was suggestive of a murder, or a robbery, or something of a similar nature requiring the superintendence of the authorities. I could have been much impressed by those old worm-eaten boards, which Shakespeare's feet had trod, but who could adore a sacred spot with two policemen standing at his elbow, irreverently lounging against the walls, and blowing their noses like thunder in great sheets of red calico?



Could not remain and muse in such company; so looked hurriedly round at the countless names scribbled all over the walls and ceiling, noticing "Walter Scott" awkwardly scratched on one of the diamond panes of the window, and rendered almost illegible by the names of Brown and Jones and Robinson that had been scrawled through it, over it, under it, and all about it; saw also the name of Thackeray neatly written in pencil on the ceiling, the place nearest his hand; and observed generally that the names that were written in the largest characters and in the most conspicuous places, were those of ladies and gentlemen from the United States of America. Paid another sixpence to the Museum, where I saw many interesting things, including Shakespeare's ring, which he must have worn on his thumb; the desk at which he sat at school, and on which he had only partly accomplished the carving of his initials, having been unable, apparently, to turn the tail of the S, leaving it in the condition of a C; many documents of the period, one relating to house property, with John Shakespeare, his mark (a very unsteady cross), at the foot of it; a letter to the poet from a friend in London, asking him for the loan of thirty pounds—the only epistle extant addressed to the poet; a large folio manuscript book, recently discovered in the Lord Chamberlain's office, in which Shakespeare is mentioned at the head of a list of other players, as having received "iiij yards of skarlet red cloth," to enable him to appear in a procession on the occasion of the entry of King James into London; a flat candlestick found at the bottom of the well in New Place, the site of the Bard's grand house, a candlestick with which he may often have gone up to bed, and which, having been found at the bottom of a well, I am inclined to regard as a true relic; much mulberry and many clay pipes of modern aspect, which I reject altogether.

From the house to the church, where I deem myself fortunate in finding a seat in the chancel exactly opposite the Bard's monument. I am afraid I paid more attention to the bust than to the service. The effigy struck me very much, and gave me quite a new idea of the Bard's features and expression. Give me this bust, and I resign to you all the portraits. I have here the counterfeit presentment of a face suggestive above all things of strong vitality, freshness of spirit, and liveliness of disposition. I can imagine this to be the face of a man who was full of natural genius and did not know it; whose animal and mental spirits never flagged; who never toiled at anything; whose head never ached. I cannot discuss the question of the plaster cast of the face, said to have been taken after death, and used as a model by the artist who executed this effigy. I can only say that the effigy satisfies me, and that I can believe Shakespeare to have been exactly such a man as it represents. I am in a very favourable position in the chancel for making these observations and revolving these thoughts, but not for hearing the Archbishop of Dublin's sermon, which is preached far away up

in the body of the church from a pulpit which I cannot see. Every now and then, however, I hear the word "Shakespeare," and catch portions of familiar quotations from his works, and, straining my ear, I hear the archbishop say by way of peroration, that Shakespeare was a gift from Heaven, for which we ought to give thanks. And after a three hours' sederunt, we stream out of the beautiful church, and march home to our dinners (getting cold) to the martial strains of the town band; and as I keep step to "See the conquering hero," I wonder if Exeter Hall is present, and what he is thinking of all this.

I walk across the fields in the evening to Ann Hathaway's cottage, and am charmed with the quiet rural beauty of the scene. The fields are sparkling with daisies and wild flowers, like stars in a firmament of green; the rooks are cawing high up on the trees; the groves are ringing with the songs of birds; the air is laden with the perfume of new leaves. That long-expected thrill comes unbidden now. Truly a place to nurse a poet. I sit lingering upon every stile, drawing in great draughts of the fresh exhilarating air, as if I could take in a stock of it to last me when I have returned to the murky city. And by-and-by little maidens come round me with offerings of bunches of daisies and cowslips, with a view to halfpence—and when I inquire the whereabouts of the cottage, they all volunteer to be my guides; and remonstrance and halfpence being equally in vain, I proceed onwards escorted by a whole troop of maidens, who seem to conduct me in triumph. I find the cottage more real than the house; no paint and varnish here; but all the old beams, many of the old stones, and a thatched roof that might be any age. A female descendant of the Hathaways receives me at the door joyfully, and conducts me through the apartments—the sitting-room and kitchen combined, where I imagined William and Ann sitting courting on the stone ledge under the great chimney—if, indeed, Ann's father ever allowed the lad to come beyond the garden-gate—up-stairs to the bedroom, where Ann probably arrayed herself in bridal attire previous to proceeding on William's arm to Luddington church. And here there is a wonderful old bedstead of black oak, which I imagined might be that "second-best" which the Bard bequeathed to his widow. The female descendant of the Hathaways could not say: perhaps it might be. Express myself very much pleased with the cottage, and descendant of the Hathaways hopes I will tell my friends that the show is worth seeing. On looking at the visitors' book I can understand her anxiety in this respect. Very few pilgrims have as yet walked across the fields to view Ann Hathaway's cottage. I return by the way I came, and find a missionary preaching under a hedge to a select congregation of rustics, denouncing the established clergy, especially in the form of archbishops, calling down vengeance upon the Pavilion, and describing Shakespeare as a worm. The expected influx of visitors from all corners

of the earth did not take place at the beginning of the week, as the natives fondly hoped; and sleeping became a less expensive luxury. Beds declined in the market, and sofas that had been looking up on Saturday, were entirely at a discount. Omnibuses came rattling up from the station with only three or four persons in them. Wombwell's menagerie came in with a little village of yellow vans and many men and horses, looked about and thought it would go away again. Eventually, however, drew up beside the Scotch giant, and blew brass horns until it was black in the face; but to no purpose. Performing elephants were reported to be engaged in an entirely new and astonishing feat—that of eating their heads off. I call at the office of the committee, and find that a poet has sent in an invocation beginning:

Come let us Tercentenerate—

Wander forth again and invoke the town in the poet's words: Come let us tercentenerate, by all means. But at present all the tercentenerating is done by the town band, which for wind is a paragon. The performance of the Messiah at the Pavilion in the afternoon is, as respects the attendance, a failure. The audience consisted chiefly of the gentry of the neighbourhood, who came in in their carriages and went away again immediately the performance was over. It was a bitter sight for the natives to see the horses eating out of their own nose-bags, and the owners of the horses sitting in the carriages eating out of *their* own nose-bags—not patronising the town to the extent of a feed of corn, nor a biscuit and a glass of sherry. Prospect brightens, however, on Tuesday, when the players come. Tickets for Twelfth Night going off rapidly, and the indefatigable mayor, who is ubiquitous, begins to look more cheerful. The vicar, beloved of all the natives high and low, is seen driving through the town a phaeton, in which are seated side by side the Bishop of St. Andrews and Sir Andrew Aguecheek, the bishop craving for something more solid than Twelfth Night, and asking Sir Andrew why he doesn't play Macbeth. I go to the Pavilion for the first time to see the comedy, and am delighted with the splendid proportions of the building; consider it a model of what a theatre ought to be, and can only account for its perfection by the supposition that the architect set to work to construct a wooden tent and by accident hit upon a perfect theatre. The Pavilion is larger in area than any theatre in London, and yet the spectator can see and hear in every part of it, and this seems to be owing to the low roof and the absence of piled-up tiers of boxes. Will some one confer a great obligation on the London play-going public by bringing the Pavilion up to London, and planting it, say, in Leicester-square? Sitting in a wide open balcony, with plenty of room to move about, and neither oppressed with heat nor chilled with draughts of cold air, I thought Twelfth Night a more enjoyable comedy than I had ever thought it before, and considered that I had never seen it so well played

even by the Haymarket company: which impressions, I have no doubt, were induced by the beauty and the comfort of the theatre. I had seen all the plays and all the actors, but I went night after night simply to enjoy the rare English luxury of being comfortable in a theatre.

Now that the players were coming down every day, there was an agreeable combination of the *rus in urbe*, of London and Stratford, about the place. When I had heard the band blow from all quarters of the town, and marched hither and thither, always turning into Henley-street to see the House, and never finding anybody near it, except on one occasion, when Punch was giving his performance exactly opposite; when I had mused myself nearly asleep in the old churchyard, or by the banks of the placid Avon; when I had inspected the portraits of the Bard in the Town-hall, and the plaster cast with some hairs adhering to the moustache, concerning which I had grave doubts, and the walking-stick and drinking-cup under the glass case, and more pipes from New Place; and gazed in through a window at an old rusty piece of iron, said to be the original key of the church where Shakespeare was married; and dropped in for a glass of ale at the Falcon, whose parlour is lined with the oak panelling from the Bard's grand house, and where the Bard himself is said to have sat of an evening and smoked a pipe, to the wonder and amazement of the village gossips—when I had done all these things, and tercentenerated (poet, I thank thee for that word!) to my heart's content, it was very pleasant to betake me to a certain snug room in the Red Horse, there to foregather with Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Sir Toby Belch, and Malvolio, and the two Dromios, and Touchstone, and many more, who were well bestowed at that hostel, when they were not being entertained by the most hospitable Mayor and the no less hospitable Vicar. And here, whenever a new comer arrived, Washington Irving's poker was brought in, tenderly encased in a blue baize sheath, and handed round to be admired. Washington Irving had stirred the fire with that very poker, in that very room, and so it has been a holy poker ever since. And here the Irish "busker" stole in one evening and gave us a recitation with remarkable emphasis and propriety, showing that, when occasion required, he had a soul above Limerick Races and Irish jigs.

Away on the top of an omnibus to Charlote Park, the scene of the Bard's poaching exploit. An unbelieving phantom who has haunted me for days, and denied the birthplace, and the tomb, and everything else, now denies the poaching. I shut him up finally, by myself denying Shakespeare altogether. After a three miles' ride, we come upon the park, which is swarming with tame deer, and I picture young Will sneaking under the shadow of the wall to knock one of them on the head. Seeing that the deer are all as tame as hens or ducks, it came into my head that it was not poaching but something else, which I will not mention. Drive

up to the new gate, beside which is preserved an old post, which we are left to imagine is the very post on which the youthful poet fixed his lampoon upon Sir Thomas. And now a strange thought. The house and park of the Lucys are thrown open to visitors to-day in the name of one who once did the family the honour to steal a deer from its park. If the story be not true, it is still more remarkable that a slander in connexion with the Bard's name should have been enough to immortalise a house, and render a family famous. The house and grounds very beautiful—the gardens laid out to realise a picture by Watteau: the house reminding one of the magnificence of Versailles—oak floors, emblazoned ceilings, and the walls hung with rare pictures by old masters. The portrait of Sir Thomas Lucy over the mantelpiece, and the marble monument in the church forbid the idea of Justice Shallow. They are emphatically the portraits of a gentleman—a chivalrous-looking gentleman, with a fine head and a noble countenance.

Returning over the old bridge to Stratford, I am horrified to see the calm bosom of the Avon being ruffled by the paddle-wheels of a dirty steam-boat from the Birmingham Soho. Man on the bank touting for passengers to go up the river to Luddington, where the Bard was married. I have seen his birthplace, and I have seen his tomb, and I should like to view the scene of the middle event of his life; but I decline to navigate the Avon in a steam-boat, so forego Luddington, and content myself with another sight of the old key in the shop window in High-street.

Now, if you ask me if I passed a pleasant time and enjoyed myself, I answer that I passed a very pleasant time, and never enjoyed myself more in my life. Nature has made the neighbouring country a paradise of quiet beauty, and the mayor and the committee, as the representatives of Art, certainly did everything in their power to add to the delights of the town. The erection of that handsome Pavilion I regard as a great achievement, and too much praise cannot be awarded to the committee for its spirit and enterprise in providing entertainments utterly regardless of expense. As an example, the whole of the scenery and properties that were used in *Romeo and Juliet* at the Princess's Theatre, on Tuesday night, in London, were used in Stratford on Wednesday, and were seen again in London on the evening of Thursday. I think, as a whole, the celebration was as successful as could have been reasonably expected. The Pavilion was never filled, but it would have been difficult to fill so large a building even in London. If the visitors from the neighbourhood came and went away again the same day without spending money in the town, the natives had only themselves to blame. Thousands were scared away by the false reports of overcrowded hotels and high charges. But that honour to the Bard had much to do with the celebration, I will not pretend to declare, in the face of the fact, that the most

successful entertainment in the Pavilion, specially erected for the purpose of performing his works, was a masked ball.

### SUSSEX IRONMASTERS.

THE ironworks of Sussex and Kent were the most important in England for sixteen hundred years. In the sandstone beds of the Forest Ridge, called by geologists the Hastings sand, which lies between the chalk and the oolite-layers, there is an abundance of ironstone. The ironstone beds lie in a north-easterly direction from Ashburnham and Heathfield to the neighbourhood of Crowborough; and timber for the ironstone, fuel suitable for smelting the ores, lay handy and plentiful—the country about having been called the Forest of Anderida, and the Weald, or wild wood, and being full of large oaks. The district thus combined both the conditions suitable for iron-making. When, in the far and obscure past, the iron-smelting began here, nobody can tell, but more than seventeen hundred years ago, in the year 120, the iron-ores of Sussex were extensively worked by the Romans, or by Teutonic iron-workers using Roman pottery, and the coins of Nero, of Vespasian, and Diocletian. Coins of Roman emperors and fragments of Roman pottery have been plentifully found, in a bed of cinder-heaps extending over several acres, at Old Land Farm, near Maresfield. Throughout the county, old mansions, places, and farm-houses occur, bearing such names as Furnace-place, Cinder Hill, Hammer Pond, and Forge Farm. But Sussex iron is now a mere curiosity, for the Sussex furnaces, which were probably blazing long before the Christian era, were all except one blown out by the end of the eighteenth century.

The discovery of the art of smelting iron by pit coal enabled the districts combining ironstone and coal to undersell the district in which, although the ores remained, the fuel was always becoming scarcer and dearer; but, whilst the iron trade flourished in Sussex, noteworthy incidents marked its history, and notable men pursued it. Several wealthy families in the county owe their fortunes to the iron trade. Smith, the most common of all names, is one which is now disguised and abandoned, but it ought to be remembered that this commonness of the name ought to accompany the characteristic of the English nation, for the Englishman is pre-eminently the blacksmith of the world. A Saxon means a sharp blade. Whatever other superiorities he may boast, it is chiefly in reference to iron tools and machinery that the superiority of the Englishman is admitted. He may call himself John Bull, but he is John Smith. And, in ancient times, the blacksmith was a great man, holding a high place at court, sitting at royal tables, and quenching the spark in his throat after hobnobbing and nobbing with kings. Indeed, Smith and Smithson (Hadad and Benhadad) were the

names of a Syrian dynasty, and even when an usurper of another family seized the throne, he took the names with it.

Vegetable and animal decomposition in the bed and delta of a mighty river produced, say the geologists, the iron of the ferruginous clays and sands of the Wealden. The clay ironstone was the ore of the Forest Ridge; at the western extremity of the Iron District the ferruginous sands were used; and in the Clay Country, a comparatively recent concretion, or bog iron, called iron rag, is frequently turned up by the plough. This puddling stone is composed of clay and gravel, and about twenty-five or thirty per cent of oxide of iron. Crowborough is the loftiest point of this Iron District, being about eight hundred and four feet above the level of the sea.

Mr. Mark Antony Lower, the authority followed by all compilers of information on this subject, is of opinion that the iron of this district was wrought long before the conquest of this island by the Romans. The Britons apprised the invaders that they knew already the uses of iron for military purposes, by mowing their ranks with their scythe-armed chariots. Cæsar says their coins were iron rings of a certain weight—a description applicable at the present day to certain coins or moneys used by the Chinese. Sussex and Kent were, probably, the maritime regions, which, he says, produced iron, although only in small quantities. Pliny alludes to the iron smelted in Britain. Abundant proofs of the activity of this industry during the period of the Roman occupation have been discovered. Scorie, or the cinders of the extinct furnaces, have been extensively used in repairing roads; and, in a heap of cinders lying ready for use on the side of the London-road, in 1844, a small bit of pottery attracted the attention of the Rev. Edward Turner. On examination, it proved to be undoubtedly Roman. The cinders, he learned on inquiry, came from Maresfield, his own parish, where lay a large heap of them at a place called Old Land Farm, near Buxted. When he visited this cinder-bed, six or seven acres in extent, the labourers were laying bare the remains of a Roman settlement. In a sort of grave lay a funeral deposit of pottery. Scarcely a barrow-load of cinders was driven out that did not contain fragments of pottery. Brass coins of Nero, Vespasian, Tetricus, and Diocletian, were identified. Deeming them old halfpence, the labourers had “chucked” Roman coins away because “the letters on ’em was pretty near rubbed out.” Besides coins, there were found in these acres of cinders fragments of red or Samian ware, implements, fibulæ, armillæ, and mortaria.

Cæsar had recorded the unimportance of the iron industry of the maritime regions of Albion, and such was its insignificance in the period subsequent to the Roman occupation, that Sussex was not mentioned in Domesday Book as an iron producing country, although the iron trade of Somerset, Hereford, Gloucester, Cheshire, and Lincoln are mentioned. A Bishop of Chichester, even in the thirteenth century, wrote

to his steward requesting him to buy iron in the neighbourhood of Gloucester for an hospital at Winchester. Of the Sussex ironworks, the earliest record is in a murage grant of Henry the Third, authorising the town of Lewes to exact a penny toll on every cart-load of iron from the neighbouring weald. A Master Henry, of Lewes, received payments a quarter of a century later for iron work in this king’s chamber, and for his monument in Westminster Abbey. The Crown, in the reign of Edward the First, smelted the iron ores of St. Leonard’s Forest. A complaint was laid before the Lord Mayor by the ironmongers of London against the smiths of the Weald, because the irons for wheels were shorter than they ought to be. The roads, if roads there were in those days, were so impassable that Sussex iron was carried to London by water. On the authority of the Wardrobe account (Carlton Ride MSS.), Mr. Mark Antony Lower says:

“In the thirteenth year of Edward the Second, Peter de Walsham, sheriff of Surrey and Sussex, by virtue of a precept from the King’s Exchequer, made a provision of horse-shoes and nails of different sorts for the expedition against the Scots. The number furnished on the occasion was 3000 horse-shoes and 29,000 nails, and the expense of their purchase from various places within the sheriff’s jurisdiction, and their delivery in London, by the hands of John de Norton, clerk, was 14*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*”

Iron ore paid title in Western Sussex in 1342. There is a cast-iron slab, much worn by being trodden upon, in Durwash church, with the inscription, in Latin: “Pray for the soul of John Collins.” Until the civil war in the time of Charles the First, sewing needles were made in Chichester. In many old farm-houses in Sussex, brand-irons, brand-dogs or andirons, such as are still used in countries which burn wood fires, and supported the merry yule logs of our forefathers, still retain the places they have occupied for centuries within the ample chimneys. The cast-iron chimney-backs were ornamented with figures in relief of the most various kinds. Some of the heads appear to be portraits: one of them reminded me of the casts of Oliver Cromwell. Among these ornaments in relief are armorial bearings, the Royal arms, grapes and vine-leaves, the Tudor badge of rose and crown. Edward the Third used hooped cannon against the Scots in 1327, nineteen years before they were employed at Crecy against the French, but there is no evidence bearing on the question whether or not they were made in Sussex. But two centuries later, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, Ralph Hogge, aided by one Peter Baude, a Frenchman, cast cannon at Buxted. The device of the Hogges, Hoggés, Hoggéts, or Huggets, is the animal, and the name was, says Mr. Lower, probably of Norman origin. The traditional distich is still devoutly believed in the neighbourhood of Huget’s Furnace, near Buxted and Mayfield—

*Master Hugget and his man John,  
They did cast the first Can-non.*



Down to the present day many Huggets are blacksmiths in East Sussex. The terms pig and sow are still associated with iron, and this may be the origin of the device, and the name. And Master Huggett and his man John may have a more assured place in the Story of the Guns than has yet been won by either Armstrong or Whitworth. Two of Peter Baude's brass guns are still to be seen in the Tower of London. The cannon made at Robert's Bridge were floated down the Rother by means of "shuts," a sort of locks.

As men of free minds, the Sussex ironmasters furnished several Protestant martyrs during the Reformation struggle. Richard Woodman, of Wartleton, in one of his examinations before the Bishop of Winchester, said: "Let me go home, I pray you, to my wife and children, to see them kept, and other poore folke that I would set aworke, by the help of God. I have set aworke a hundreth persons, ere this, all the yeare together." Richard Woodman was burnt at Lewes in 1557. Archbishop Parker denounced the iron trade to Queen Elizabeth as "a plague."

Early editions of Camden's Britannia contain quaint and graphic pictures of the iron districts of the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts. Speaking of Sussex, he says: "Full of iron mines it is in sundry places, where, for the making and founding thereof, there be furnaces on every side, and a huge deal of wood is yearly burnt, to which purpose divers brooks in many places are brought to run in one channel, and sundry meadows turned into pools and waters that they might be of power sufficient to drive hammer-mills, which, beating upon the iron, resound all over the places adjoining."

Extracts from Memoirs of the Gale Family, supplied by Mr. R. W. Blencowe to the Transactions of the Sussex Archaeological Society, give us an insight into the minds and characters of the ironmasters whose energy and sagacity guided this noisy industry, which contrasts so strikingly with the quiet now reigning among the Sussex downs, except where it is disturbed occasionally by the distant roar of a railway train, or the screech of the locomotive whistle. In the prospect of leaving his sons "in a world of fraud and deceit, a world of all manner of wickedness in all sorts of people," Leonard Gale wrote the following brief note of his birth and living. "The advice of me, Leonard Gale, to my two sons, Leonard and Harry, being in the 67th year of my age, A.D. 1687. My sons hearken unto the words of your loving father, who earnestly desireth your welfare, and encreasing of grace, learning, and riches. I was born in the parish of Sevenoake in Kent, my father, a blacksmith, living in Riverhead-street, in the parish aforesaid, who lived there in very good repute, and drove a very good trade; his name Francis Gale: my mother was the daughter of one George Pratt, a very good yeoman, living at Chelsford, about five miles from Riverhead; my father had, by a former wife, two sons, and by my mother three sons and

one daughter; and when I was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, my father and mother going to visit a friend at Sensom (Kensing?) in the said county, took the plague, and quickly after they came home, my mother fell sick, and about six days after died, nobody thinking of such a disease. My father made a great burial for her, and abundance came to it, not fearing anything, and notwithstanding several women layd my mother forth, and no manner of clothes were taken out of the chamber when she died, yet not one person took the distemper; this I set down as a miracle. After her burial, we were all well one whole week, and a great many people frequented our house, and we our neighbours' houses, but at the week's end, in two days, fell sick my father, my eldest brother, my sister, and myself; and in three days after this my two younger brothers, Edward and John, fell sick, and though I was very ill, my father sent me to market to buy provisions, but before I came home it was noysed abroad that it was the plague, and as soon as I was come in adooers they charged us to keep in, and set a strong watch over us, yet all this while no one took the distemper of or from us, and about the sixth day after they were taken, three of them dyed in three hours, one after another, and were all buried in one grave, and about two days after the two youngest dyed both together, and were buried in one grave. All this while I lay sick in another bed, and the tender looked every hour for my death; but it pleased God most miraculously to preserve me, and without any sore breaking, only I had a swelling in my groin, which was long ere it sunk away, and I have been the worse for it ever since, and when I was recovered, I was shut up with two women, one man, and one child, for three months, and neither of them had the distemper. And now, at between sixteen and seventeen, I came into the world, to shift for myself, having one brother left, which was out at prentice, who presently fell out with me about what my father had left me, and when I had been at about 10% charges, we came to an agreement. I, by my guardian, had the administration, and my brother quickly spent all his portion, and went to sea, and died; and I, entering into the world at this age, worth about 200%, within the space of two years and a half, ran out 150% of it, not with ill husbandry, for I laboured night and day to save what I had left to me, but bad servants and trusting was the ruin of me, and then I turned away both man and maid, and lived starke alone for the space of one month, in which time I cast up my accounts, and found that I was not worth 50% if I had sold myself to my shirt; then I was in a great strait, and knew not which way to steer, but I cried unto the Lord with my whole heart and with tears, and He heard my cry, and put into my mind to try one year more, to see what I could do, for I resolved to spend nothing but mine own, and I resolved always 'to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.' Then I took a boy to strike and to blow

for me, and a man to work by the piece, but kept no maid nor woman in my house; and then I so thrived that, within two years and a half, I got back all that I had lost before, so that by the time I came to twenty-one years of age, I had lost 150*l.* and got it again, and I began to be looked upon as a thriving man; and so I was, for all the time I kept a smith's forge I laid by 100*l.* a year, one with another, and having gotten enough to keep me well, and being burdened with free quartering of soldiers, I left off, and came down into Sussex, after one Spur, who owed me between 40*l.* and 50*l.*, and he being in a bad capacity to pay me, though he did afterwards pay me all. Before I went home again I took St. Leonard's forge, and so kept a shop to sell iron, and let out the smith's forge. I had not been in the country one year but Mr. Walter Burrell, whom I looked upon as my mortal enemy, sent to speak with me, and when I came to him he told me he heard a very good report of me, and desired to be acquainted with me, and he told me if I would let his son Thomas come into partnership with me, he would help me to "sows" nearer, and better, and cheaper than I had bought before. I told him I wondered to hear such things from him, for I heard he was my mortal enemy because I took that forge, and I told him that if he would let me go partners with him in the furnace, he should go partners with me in the forge. He desired time to consider of it, and he rode presently into Kent to inquire of me, and found such an account of me, that he told me I should go partners with him in all his works."

This partnership lasted about fifteen years, and the trade in iron falling off, it was dissolved, and Leonard Gale became the sole proprietor of Tinsloe forge. "Considering," he says, "that I had got about 5000*l.* or 6000*l.*, having traded about thirty years, and being about forty-six years of age, and having neither brother, sister, nor child in the world, I bethought myself about taking a wife, and chose this woman, your mother, the daughter of Mr. Johnson, with whom I had 500*l.* and one year's board with her; and now, at the writing of these lines, I have attained unto the age of sixty-six years, having been married about twenty years, in which time, as God hath been pleased to send me five children, so hath He improved my estate to at least 16,000*l.*, which is 500*l.* a year, one year with another, which is a very great miracle to me how I should come to so great an estate, considering my small dealings, the bad times, and my great losses by bad debts, suits of law, and by building; which enforces me to extol the name of the great God, for He was always my director in all good ways, and when I was in distress I called upon Him, and He heard me, and gave me more than ever my heart desired; for I had no man in the world that would stand by me, either for advice or for money when I wanted, which enforced me to be careful not to run beyond my own substance, and always resolved 'to keep a good conscience towards God and towards man,' and not to do to others

that which I would not have them do to me." . . . "Thus, my son, I have set down a short breviate of my life unto this day, and what the Almighty hath bestowed on me, in the sixty-sixth year of my age, in all which time I hated idleness and vain-gloriousness, and I never boasted of anything but to the glory of God, and my own comfort. I always held the Scriptures for the rule of life to walk by; and I always counted it to be a deadly sin to be in any man's debt longer than they were willing to trust me." . . . "My son, Leonard, I pray you to have a tender respect unto your brothers and sisters, for few men would have left so great an estate to you, and so little to them, when I have gained it all by the blessing of God and my own industry; therefore grudge not anything that I may give them; and next have a tender respect to your mother, who hath been very tender over you in bringing you up, and who nourished you with her own breast." . . . "Next I advise you to have a care and be not too familiar with your vile neighbours, as I have been, and you now see how they hate me; indeed, they are but a beggarly and bastard generation, and whom I have been at great charges with. Next, suffer no man to inclose my land, nor build houses on the waste, for there is Denshies, and Bowmans, and Finches, which are cottages which will be a perpetual charge to you and yours, and so with Piggotts. Next, I charge you never to suffer that lane to be inclosed by Woolborough Sears, who took delight to damn up highways to his own ruin; and so it was observed by his neighbours, for he never thrived after he took in Langly-lane, and burned the Crawley footway, and to my knowledge he never thrived since he took in this lane. Next, I advise you to have a great care of ill and debauched company, especially wicked and depraved priests, such as are at this present time about me, as Lee and Troughton, of Worth; never give any of them any entertainment, nor none of their companions, for they are most vile and wicked men to my knowledge. Next, my advice is, that whatever estates either of you ever attain to, yet follow some employment, which will keep you from abundance of expenses and charges, and take you off from evil thoughts and wicked actions; and observe the mechanic priests, which have nothing to do but to come to church one hour or two on a Sunday, and all the week besides they will eat and drink at such men's houses as you are, but avoid them; but love and cherish every honest godly priest wherever you find them; and, above all, hold fast the ancient Protestant religion, for a better religion cannot be found out than that is, only I could wish the abuses were taken away, and wicked men found out, or punished, or turned out. Next, my advice is, that above all things you avoid swearing, lying, drunkenness, and gaming, which are the ruin of all men's estates, that are ruined in this nation, and pride of apparell, which is a great consumer of men's estates in this kingdom."

Pride of apparel, denounced by this Puritan ironfounder, was one of the vices which pre-

pared and provoked the civil war. In the reign of James the First of England a satirical poet said:

They wore a farm in shoestrings, edged with gold,  
And spangled garters, worth a copyhold.

Harrison, the old chronicler, said of the women of London even in the reign of Elizabeth, "I have met with some so disguised that it hath passed my skill to discover whether they were men or women."

Three years after writing his advice to his sons, Leonard Gale the elder died in 1690, and Leonard, his eldest son, succeeded to his property. This Leonard resided four years as a gentleman commoner at University College, and was called to the bar. "Being," he says, "very distrustful of my own abilities, and too great a lover of idleness and ease, I neglected the study of the law, and devoted myself to management of my property in the country." Eight years later he bought the estate and timber of Crabbett for 9000*l*. "Two reasons," he says, "chiefly induced me to buy Crabbett; one was that my estate might lie together, and the other that I might have a good estate, which I had not before, for I was always afraid of building. Building is a sweet impoverishing." . . . "August 19, 1703, being near thirty years old, I married with Mrs. Sarah Knight, my mother's sister's only daughter, after I had made my court to her for two or three years. By her I had a plentiful fortune (between 7000*l*. or 8000*l*.). We were married in the parish church of Charlwood by Mr. Hesketh, the rector. She was truly my own choice, and I am extremely well satisfied with it, and do verily believe that for truth and sincerity, kindness and fidelity, humility and good nature, she has few equals. I am sure none can exceed her, and I pray God to continue us long together in health and prosperity, and to crown us with all those blessings which He has promised to those that serve Him and walk in his ways."

This blacksmith's son was elected a Member of Parliament for East Grinstead in 1710, without expense or opposition. The power of bribes and threats he deploras as "an eternal scandal to the whole nation." "Our lands and liberties must be precarious; our so much boasted privilege of having free parliaments must be utterly lost. For this is an observation founded on the greatest truth, that he that will buy his seat in parliament will sell his vote; and to what misery and poverty such men will soon bring this nation God only knows!" This Leonard Gale advised his children to be sure as they grew rich in estate to grow richer in wisdom and virtue, taking care that their income should exceed their expenses, and that they daily heard and read more than they spoke or told. When he was fifty-two years of age, he said, "I am now worth at Michaelmas, 1724, at a reasonable computation, 40,667*l*.; though I have been guilty of many oversights in missing good bargains and taking bad." When fifty-eight years of age, he said, "My memory is growing worse, for I have made some mistake in my ac-

counts within the last three years of above 150*l*., which I cannot possibly find out after my utmost endeavours." His account of the marriage of his daughter Philippa reminds us of the change which has come over English manners during the past century. "My daughter Philippa, 'an ornament to her sex, her parents, and the family she is grafted in,' was married January 21, 1730, to James Clitherow, Esq., she being in the twenty-first year of her age, and he about thirty-seven. I gave her 8000*l*. to her portion, and she has 1200*l*. per annum settled upon her and her heirs, of which 600*l*. per annum is for her jointure. All our relatives, except Dr. Woodward and his wife, were at the wedding, which was on Thursday, and they stayed a week with us at Crabbett, and that day fortnight she went home to Brentford, accompanied by her mother, who stayed three weeks with her, and Mrs. Ann Clitherow, his sister; and Tim Nightingale, who had lived with us near twelve years, went with her for her maid. There was abundance of people at Worth church on the wedding, and a great many strowers; and the Sunday following there was a prodigious congregation at church, when Mr. Hampton preached an excellent sermon on this text, 'Marriage is honourable in all men, and the bed undefiled;' being the same sermon he preached the next Sunday after I married, near twenty-five years before." Leonard Gale died in his seventy-seventh year, a few months after the death of his only son Henry, and the wealth earned by three generations of frugal and careful men passed to the families of the husbands of his daughters.

The most celebrated, however, of the Sussex ironmasters was far more ancient than the Gales, the legendary St. Dunstan. The tendency of historical criticism has not been favourable to the more piquant points of ancient story; and Mr. Mark Antony Lower allows no great antiquity even to the tongs which is said to have held so firmly the nose of the arch-temper. The parish of Mayfield was famous for its iron. There were considerable ironworks upon the archiepiscopal estate. The massive iron hand-rail of the grand staircase is one of the relics of this manufacture. "The hammer, anvil, and tongs of St. Dunstan preserved here," says Mr. M. A. Lower, "seem to refer as much to the iron trade so famous in these parts, as to the alleged proficiency of the saint in the craft of a blacksmith. The anvil and tongs are of no great antiquity, but the hammer with its iron handle may be considered a mediæval relic." Archbishops, like doctors, differ; and, although Archbishop Parker, as we have seen, denounced the iron trade as a plague, there have been ecclesiastical dignitaries equally high who have encouraged it, and saints who pursued it with marvellous results.

The Morleys of Glynde worked the forge at Hawksden. They were established there in the sixteenth century, and, in the seventeenth, Herbert Morley, the regicide, died, possessed of these works, which descended to his sons.

Among the greatest of these families of iron-

founders were the Fowles of Riverhall. They built a fine mansion in 1591, which still retains traces of its former grandeur. King James gave to William Fowle a grant of free warren over his numerous manors and lands in Wadhurst, Frant, Rotherfield, and Mayfield. The fourth in descent and heir-male of this William Fowle left Riverhall, and kept the turnpike-gate in Wadhurst. His grandson, Nicholas Fowle, a day-labourer, emigrated to America in 1839, with his son John Fowle, a wheelwright, and a numerous young family, carrying with them, as a family relic, the royal grant of free warren given to their ancestor.

This family, like many others, rose and fell with the Sussex iron trade. Geologists say there is still in this district more and finer iron-ore than in many of the coal-fields of England; but, when the art of using coal in smelting instead of charcoal was discovered, it was found to be cheaper. Without intending it, the coal-miners interposed to preserve the woods from the destruction lamented by the poets. Drayton, in his *Polyolbion*, made the trees denounce the iron trade in the following strain:

Jove's oak, the warlike ash, vein'd elm, the softer beech,  
Short hazel, maple plain, light asp, the bending wych,  
Tough holly, and smooth birch must altogether burn.  
What should the builder serve, supplies the forger's turn;  
When under public good, base private gain takes hold,  
And we, poor woful woods, to ruin lastly sold.

The last of the Sussex furnaces, the property of Lord Ashburnham, was blown out in 1825. Bars of Sussex iron are now curiosities or relics. The iron of the entrances to the new church at Elsted was made at Ashburnham in one of the last heats of the forge. A true Sussex man feels a peculiar thrill of regret when he passes the railings of St. Paul's in London; and, the ores being plentiful in his native fields, he may be excused for fancying that an industry, which an improvement in metallurgy has put down, a new discovery may any day raise up again, and anthracite, or some other fuel, enable Sussex again to supply iron for armies or for fleets, for monuments or firesides.

## A RENT IN A CLOUD.

IN TWENTY-FOUR CHAPTERS.

### CHAPTER XIV. THE LAST WALK IN THE GARDEN.

THE only letter Calvert found at the post-office for the villa was one in the vicar's hand, addressed to Miss Grainger. Nothing from Loyd himself, nor any newspaper. So far, then, Loyd had kept his pledge. He awaited to see if Calvert would obey his injunctions before he proceeded to unmask him to his friends.

Calvert did not regard this reserve as anything generous—he set it down simply to fear. He said to himself, “The fellow dreads me; he knows that it is never safe to push men of my

stamp to the wall; and he is wise enough to apply the old adage, about leaving a bridge to the retreating enemy. I shall have more difficulty in silencing the women, however. It will be a hard task to muzzle their curiosity; but I must try some plan to effect it. Is that telegram for me?” cried he, as a messenger hastened hither and thither in search for some one.

“Il Signor Grainger?”

“Yes, all right,” said he, taking it. It was in these few words.

“They find it can be done—make tracks.”

“DRAYTON.”

“They find it can be done,” muttered he. “Which means, it is legal to apprehend me. Well, I supposed as much! I never reckoned on immunity; and as to getting away, I’m readier for it, and better provided too, than you think for, Master Algernon. Indeed, I can’t well say what infatuation binds me to this spot, apart from the peril that attends it. I don’t know that I am very much what is called in love with Florence, though I’d certainly marry her if she’d have me; but for that there are, what the lady novelists call, ‘mixed motives,’ and I rather suspect it is not with any especial or exclusive regard for her happiness that I’d enter into the holy bonds. I should like to consult some competent authority on the physiology of hatred—why it is that, though scores of fellows have injured me deeply in life, I never bore any, no, nor the whole of them collectively, the ill will that I feel for that man. He has taken towards me a tone that none have ever dared to take. He menaces me! Fifty have wronged: none have ever threatened me. He who threatens, assumes to be your master, to dictate the terms of his forbearance, and to declare under what conditions he will spare you. Now, Master Loyd, I can’t say if this be a part to suit *your* powers, but I know well, the other is one which in no way is adapted to *mine*. Nature has endowed me with a variety of excellent qualities, but, somehow, in the hurry of her benevolence, she forgot patience! I suppose one can’t have everything!”

While he thus mused and speculated, the boat swept smoothly over the lake, and Onofrio, not remarking the little attention Calvert vouchsafed to him, went on talking of “I Grainger” as the most interesting subject he could think of. At last Calvert’s notice was drawn to his words by hearing how the old lady had agreed to take the villa for a year, with the power of continuing to reside there longer if she were so minded.

The compact had been made only the day before, after Calvert had started for Milan, evidently—to his thinking—showing that it had been done with reference to something in Loyd’s last letter. “Strange that she did not consult *me* upon it,” thought he; “I who have been her chief counsellor on everything. Perhaps the lease of my confidence has expired. But how does it matter? A few hours more, and all these people shall be no more to me than that lazy cloud that is hanging about the mountain-top.



They may live or die, or marry, or mourn, and all be as nothing to me—as if I had never met them. And what shall I be to *them*, I wonder?" cried he, with a bitter laugh; "a very dreadful dream, I suppose; something like the memory of a shipwreck, or a fire from which they escaped without any consciousness of the means that rescued them! A horrid nightmare whose terrors always come back in days of depression and illness. At all events, I shall not be 'poor Calvert,' 'that much to be pitied creature who really had some good in him.' No, I shall certainly be spared all commiseration of that kind, and they'll no more recur willingly to my memory than they'll celebrate the anniversary of some day that brought them shame and misfortune.

"Now, then, for my positively last appearance in my present line of character! And yonder I see the old dame on the look-out for me; she certainly has some object in meeting me before her nieces shall know it.—Land me in that nook there, Onofrio, and wait for me."

"I have been very impatient for your coming," said she, as he stepped on shore; "I have so much to say to you; but, first of all, read this. It is from the vicar."

The letter was not more than a few lines, and to this purport: he was about to quit the home he had lived in for more than thirty years, and was so overwhelmed with sorrow and distress, that he really could not address his thoughts to any case but the sad one before him. "All these calamities have fallen upon us together; for although," he wrote, "Joe's departure is the first step on the road to future fortune, it is still separation, and at our age who is to say if we shall ever see him again?"

"Skip the pathetic bit, and come to this. What have we here about the P. and O. steamers?" cried Calvert.

"Through the great kindness of the Secretary of State, Joe has obtained a free passage out—a favour, as I hear, very rarely granted—and he means to pay you a flying visit; leaving this on Tuesday, to be with you on Saturday, and, by repairing to Leghorn on the following Wednesday, to catch the packet at Malta. This will give him three entire days with you, which, though they be stolen from us, neither his mother nor myself have the heart to refuse him. Poor fellow, he tries to believe—perhaps he does believe—that we are all to meet again in happiness and comfort, and I do my best not to discourage him; but I am now verging on seventy—"

"How tiresome he is about his old age; is there any more about his son?" asked Calvert, impatiently.

"Yes, he says here: 'Joe is, as you may imagine, full of business, and what between his interviews with official people, and his personal cares for his long journey, has not a moment to spare. He will, however, write to-morrow, detailing all that he has done and means to do. Of that late suggestion that came from you about referring us to a third party, neither

Joseph nor myself desire to go back; indeed, it is not at a moment like the present we would open a question that could imperil the affections that unite us. It is enough to know that we trust each other, and need neither guarantees nor guidance.'"

"The old knave!" cried Calvert. "A priest is always a Jesuit, no matter what Church he belongs to."

"Oh, Mr. Calvert."

"But he's quite right after all. I am far too worldly-minded in my notions to negotiate with men of such exalted ideas as he and his son possess. Besides, I am suddenly called away. I shall have to leave this immediately. They are making a fuss about that unfortunate affair at Basle, and want to catch me as a witness; and, as my evidence would damage a fellow I really pity, though I condemn, I must keep out of the way."

"Well, you are certain to find us here whenever you feel disposed to have your own room again. I have taken the villa for another year."

Not paying the slightest attention to this speech, he went on: "There is one point on which I shall be absolute. No one speaks of me when I leave this. Not alone that you abstain yourself from any allusion to my having been here, and what you know of me, but that you will not suffer any other to make me his topic. It is enough to say that a question of my life is involved in this request. Barnard's fate has involved me in a web of calumny and libel, which I am resolved to bear too, to cover the poor fellow's memory. If, however, by any indiscretion of my friends—and remember, it can only be of my friends under this roof—I am driven to defend myself, there is no saying how much more blood will have to flow in this quarrel. Do you understand me?"

"Partly," said she, trembling all over.

"This much you cannot mistake," said he, sternly; "that my name is not to be uttered, nor written, mind that. If, in his short visit, Loyd should speak of me, stop him at once. Say, 'Mr. Loyd, there are reasons why I will not discuss that person; and I desire that my wish be understood as a command.' You will impress your nieces with the same reserve. I suppose, if they hear that it is a matter which involves the life of more than one, that they will not need to be twice cautioned. Bear in mind, this is no caprice of mine; it is no piece of that Calvert eccentricity, to which, fairly enough sometimes, you ascribe many of my actions. I am in a position of no common peril; I have incurred it to save the fair fame of a fellow I have known and liked for years. I mean, too, to go through with it; that is, I mean up to a certain point to sacrifice myself. Up to a certain point, I say, for if I am pushed beyond that, then I shall declare to the world: Upon you and your slanderous tongues be the blame, not mine the fault, for what is to happen now."

He uttered these words with a rapidity and vehemence that made her tremble from head to

foot. This was not, besides, the first time she had witnessed one of those passionate outbursts for which his race was celebrated, and it needed no oath to confirm the menace his speech shadowed forth.

"This is a pledge, then," said he, grasping her hand. "And now to talk of something pleasanter. That old uncle of mine has behaved very handsomely; has sent me some kind messages, and, what is as much to the purpose, some money;" and, as he spoke, he carelessly drew from his pocket a roll of the bank-notes he had so lately won at play. "Before making any attempt to re-enter the service," he says, 'you must keep out of the way for a while.' And he is right there; the advice is excellent, and I mean to follow it. In his postscript he adds: 'Thank Grainger'—he means Miss Grainger, but you know how blunderingly he writes—'for all her kindness to you, and say how glad we should all be to see her at Rocksley, whenever she comes next to England.'"

The old lady's face grew crimson; shame at first, and pride afterwards, overwhelming her. To be called Grainger was to bring her back at once to the old days of servitude—that dreary life of nursery governess—which had left its dark shadow on all her later years; while to be the guest at Rocksley was a triumph she had never imagined in her vainest moments.

"Oh, will you tell him how proud I am for his kind remembrance of me, and what an honour I should feel it to pay my respects to him?"

"They'll make much of you, I promise you," said Calvert, "when they catch you at Rocksley, and you'll not get away in a hurry. Now let us go our separate ways, lest the girls suspect we have been plotting. I'll take the boat and row down to the steps. Don't forget all I have been saying," were his last words as the boat moved away.

"I hope I have bound that old fool in heavy recognisances to keep her tongue quiet; and now for the more difficult task of the young ones," said he, as he stretched himself full length in the boat, like one wearied by some effort that taxed his strength. "I begin to believe it will be a relief to me to get away from this place!" he muttered to himself, "though I'd give my right hand to pass the next week here, and spoil the happiness of those fond lovers. Could I not do it?" Here was a problem that occupied him till he reached the landing at the villa, but as he stepped on shore, he cried, "No, this must be the last time I shall ever mount these steps!"

Calvert passed the day in his room; he had much to think over, and several letters to write. Though the next step he was to take in life in all probability involved his whole future career, his mind was diverted from it by the thought that this was to be his last night at the villa—the last time he should ever see Florence. "Ay," thought he, "Lloyd will be the occupant of this room in a day or two more. I can fancy the playful tap at this door, as Milly goes down

to breakfast—I can picture the lazy fool leaning out of that window, gazing at those tall snow-peaks, while Florence is waiting for him in the garden—I know well all the little graceful attentions that will be prepared for him, vulgar dog as he is, who will not even recognise the especial courtesies that have been designed for him; well, if I be not sorely mistaken, I have dropped some poison in his cup. I have taught Florence to feel that courage is the first of manly attributes, and, what is more to the purpose, to have a sort of half dread that it is not amongst her lover's gifts. I have left her as my last legacy that rankling doubt, and I defy her to tear it out of her heart! What a sovereign antidote to all romance it is, to have the conviction, or, if not the conviction, the impression, the mere suspicion, that he who spouts the fine sentiments of the poet with such heartfelt ardour, is a poltroon, ready to run from danger and hide himself at the approach of peril. I have made Milly believe this; she has no doubt of it; so that if sisterly confidences broach the theme, Florence will find all her worst fears confirmed. The thought of this fellow as my rival maddens me!" cried he, as he started up and paced the room impatiently. "Is not that Florence I see in the garden? Alone too! What a chance!" In a moment he hastened noiselessly down the stairs, opened the drawing-room window, and was beside her.

"I hope the bad news they tell me is not true," she said, as they walked along side by side.

"What is the bad news?"

"That you are going to leave us."

"And are you such a hypocrite, Florry, as to call this bad news, when you and I both know how little I shall be needed here in a day or two? We are not to have many more moments together; these are probably the very last of them; let us be frank and honest. I'm not surely asking too much in that! For many a day you have sealed up my lips by the threat of not speaking to me on the morrow. Your menace has been, if you repeat this language, I will not walk with you again. Now, Florry, this threat has lost its terror, for to-morrow I shall be gone, gone for ever, and so to-day, here now, I say once more, I love you! How useless to tell me that it is all in vain; that you do not, cannot return my affection. I tell you I can no more despair than I can cease to love you! In the force of that love I bear you is my confidence. I have the same trust in it that I would have in my courage."

"If you but knew the pain you gave me by such words as these—"

"If you knew the pain they cost me to utter them!" cried he. "It is bringing a proud heart very low to sue as humbly as I do. And for what? Simply for time—only time. All I ask is, do not utterly reject one who only needs your love to be worthy of it. When I think of what I was when I met you first—you!—and feel the change you have wrought in my whole nature; how you have planted truthfulness where there

was once but doubt; how you have made hope succeed a dark and listless indifference—when I know and feel that in my struggle to be better it is you, and you alone, are the prize before me, and that if that be withdrawn life has no longer a bribe to my ambition—when I think of these, Florry, can you wonder if I want to carry away with me some small spark that may keep the embers alive in my heart?"

"It is not generous to urge me thus," said she, in a faint voice.

"The grasp of the drowning man has little time for generosity. You may not care to rescue me, but you may have pity for my fate."

"Oh, if you but knew how sorry I am——"

"Go on, dearest. Sorry for what?"

"I don't know what I was going to say; you have agitated and confused me so, that I feel bewildered. I shrink from saying what would pain you, and yet I want to be honest and straightforward."

"If you mean that to be like the warning of the surgeon—I must cut deep to cure you—I can't say I have courage for it."

For some minutes they walked on side by side without a word. At length he said, in a grave and serious tone, "I have asked your aunt, and she has promised me that, except strictly amongst yourselves, my name is not to be mentioned when I leave this. She will, if you care for them, give you my reasons; and I only advert to it now amongst other last requests. This is a promise, is it not?"

She pressed his hand and nodded.

"Will you now grant me one favour? Wear this ring for my sake; a token of mere memory, no more! Nay, I mean to ask Milly to wear another. Don't refuse me." He drew her hand towards him as he spoke, and slipped a rich turquoise ring upon her finger. Although her hand trembled, and she averted her head, she had not courage to say him no.

"You have not told us where you are going to, nor when we are to hear from you!" said she, after a moment.

"I don't think I know either!" said he, in his usual reckless way. "I have half a mind to join Schamyl—I know him—or take a turn with the Arabs against the French. I suppose," added he, with a bitter smile, "it is my fate always to be on the beaten side, and I'd not know how to comport myself as a winner."

"There's Milly making a signal to us. Is it dinner-time already?" said she.

"Ay, my last dinner here!" he muttered. She turned her head away, and did not speak.

On that last evening at the villa nothing very eventful occurred. All that need be recorded will be found in the following letter, which Calvert wrote to his friend Drayton, after he had wished his hosts a good night, and gained his room, retiring, as he did, early, to be up betimes in the morning and catch the first train for Milan.

"Dear Drayton,—I got your telegram, and though I suspect you are astray in your 'law,'

and don't believe these fellows can touch me, I don't intend to open the question, or reserve the point for the twelve judges, but mean to evacuate Flanders at once; indeed, my chief difficulty was to decide which way to turn, for having the whole world before me where to choose, left me in that indecision which the poet pronounces national when he says,

I am an Englishman, and naked I stand here,  
Musing in my mind what raiment I shall wear!

Chance, however, has done for me what my judgment could not. I have been up to Milan and had a look through the newspapers, and I see what I have often predicted has happened. The Rajahs of Bengal have got sick of their benefactors, and are bent on getting rid of what we love to call the blessings of the English rule in India. Next to a society for the suppression of creditors, I know of no movement which could more thoroughly secure my sympathy. The brown skin is right. What has he to do with those covenanted and uncovenanted Scotchmen who want to enrich themselves by bullying him? What need has he of governors-general, political residents, collectors, and commanders-in-chief? Could he not raise his indigo, water his rice-fields, and burn his widow, without any help of ours? particularly as our help takes the shape of taxation and vexatious interference.

"I suppose all these are very unpatriotic sentiments; but in the same proportion that Britons never will be slaves, they certainly have no objection to make others such, and I shudder in the very marrow of my morality to think that but for the accident of an accident I might at this very moment have been employed to assist in repressing the noble aspirations of niggerhood, and helping to stifle the cry of freedom that now resounds from the Sutlej to the Ganges. Is not that a twang from your own lyre, Master D.? Could our Own Correspondent have come it stronger?"

"Happily, her Majesty has no further occasion for my services, and I can take a brief from the other side. Expect to hear, therefore, in some mysterious paragraph, 'That the mode in which the cavalry were led, or the guns pointed, plainly indicated that a European soldier held command on this occasion; and, indeed, some assert that an English officer was seen directing the movements on our flank.' To which let me add the hope that the — Fusiliers may be there to see; and if I do not give the major a lesson in battalion drill, call me a Dutchman! There is every reason why the revolt should succeed. I put aside all the bosh about an enslaved race and a just cause, and come to the fact of the numerical odds opposed. The climate intolerable to one, and easily borne by the other; the distance from which reinforcements must come; and, last of all, the certainty that if the struggle only last long enough to figure in two budgets, John Bull will vote it a bore, and refuse to pay for it. But here am I getting political when I only meant to be personal; and now to

come back, I own that my resolve to go out to India has been aided by hearing that Loyd, of whom I spoke in my last, is to leave by the next mail, and will take passage on board the P. and O. steamer *Leander*, due at Malta on the 22nd. My intention is to be his fellow-traveller, and with this resolve I shall take the Austrian steamer to Corfu, and come up with my friend at Alexandria. You will perhaps be puzzled to know why the claims of friendship are so strong upon me at such a moment, and I satisfy your most natural curiosity by stating that this is a mission of torture. I travel with this man to insult and to outrage him; to expose him in public places, and to confront him at all times. I mean that this overland journey should be to him for his life long the reminiscence of a pilgrimage of such martyrdom as few have passed through, and I have the vanity to believe that not many men have higher or more varied gifts for such a mission than myself. My first task on reaching Calcutta shall be to report progress to you.

"I don't mind exposing a weakness to an old friend, and so I own to you I fell in love here. The girl had the obduracy and wrong-headedness not to yield to my suit, and so I had no choice left me but to persist in it. I know, however, that if I could only remain here a fortnight longer I should secure the inestimable triumph of rendering both of us miserable for life! Yes, Drayton, that pale girl and her paltry fifteen thousand pounds might have spoiled one of the grandest careers that ever adorned history! and lost the world the marvellous origin, rise, progress, and completion of the dynasty of the great English Begum Calvert in Bengal. Count upon me for high office whenever penny-a-lining fails you, and, if my realm be taxable, you shall be my Chancellor of the Exchequer!

"You are right about that business at Basle; to keep up a controversy would be to invest it with more interest for public gossip. Drop it, therefore, and the world will drop it; and, take my word for it, I'll give them something more to say of me one of these days than that my hair-trigger was too sensitive! I'm writing this in the most romantic of spots. The moonlight is sleeping—isn't that the conventional?—over the olive plain, and the small silvery leaves are glittering in its pale light. Up the great Alps, amongst the deep crevasses, a fitful flashing of lightning promises heat for the morrow; a nightingale sings close to my window; and through the muslin curtain of another casement I can see a figure pass and repass, and even distinguish that her long hair has fallen down, and floats loosely over neck and shoulders. How

pleasantly I might linger on here, 'My duns forgetting, by my duns forgot.' How smoothly I might float down the stream of life, without even having to pull an oar! How delightfully domestic and innocent and inglorious the whole thing! Isn't it tempting, you dog? Does it not touch even your temperament through its thick hide of worldliness? And I believe in my heart it is all feasible, all to be done.

"I have just tossed up for it. Head for India, and head it is! So that Loyd is booked for a pleasant journey, and I start to-morrow, to ensure him all the happiness in my power to confer. For the present, it would be as well to tell all anxious and inquiring friends, into which category come tailors, bootmakers, jewellers, &c., that it will be a postal economy not to address Mr. Harry Calvert in any European capital, and to let the 'bills lie on the table,' and be read this day six years, but add, that if properly treated by fortune, I mean to acquit my debts to them one of these days.

"That I 'wish they may get it' is, therefore, no scornful or derisive hope of your friend,

"H. CALVERT.

"If—not a likely matter—anything occurs worth mention, you shall have a line from me from Venice."

When he had concluded his letter, he extinguished his candles, and sat down at the open window. The moon had gone down, and, though star-lit, the night was dark. The window in the other wing of the villa, at which he had seen the figure through the curtain, was now thrown open, and he could see that Florence, with a shawl wrapped round her, was leaning out, and talking to some one in the garden underneath.

"It is the first time," said a voice he knew to be Emily's, "that I ever made a bouquet in the dark."

"Come up, Milly dearest; the dew is falling heavily. I feel it even here."

"I'll just fasten this rose I have here in his hat; he saw it in my hair to-night, and he'll remember it."

She left the garden, the window was closed. The light was put out, and all was silent.

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